The Nation.

September 30, 1978 $1

A DIALOGUE AFTER DARKNESS

MILTON VIORST

Jerusalem

Whether Camp David turns out to have been a diplomatic coup or a promise unfulfilled we shall find out in the weeks, or perhaps months, ahead. But from the perspective of one who visited Israel in the days just before the meeting, a Middle East accord seemed the logical culmination of a new mood in Israel.

Consider Prof. Yehoshafat Harkabi, former chief of Israeli intelligence and now a specialist in Middle Eastern studies at the Hebrew University. Professor Harkabi, who once took a hard line on the Palestinians, recently wrote to Prime Minister Begin resigning as an intelligence adviser. When Begin failed to reply, Harkabi sent a long letter of explanation to *Ma'ariv*, pillar of the Israeli Establishment. The newspaper published the letter, which said, in part:

> I do not believe that it is possible to prevent the establishment, sooner or later, of Arab rule in Judaea and Samaria. Every period is characterized by a number of hegemonic ideas or norms. The central norm of our period is self-determination for recognized communities. The attempt to obstruct the self-determination of such a community is an anachronism that cannot last for long.

Neither the government nor the general public stood up to cheer for Harkabi's letter. Old ideas die hard, and Israelis have held tenaciously to a set of them that defined national security in military terms alone. But, while American Jews persist in their fidelity to whatever the Israeli Government proclaims, a debate is flourishing in Israel, and important shifts in positions are evident.

The last time I was in Israel, a year ago, the country was still silent, gloomy, shuttered in the aftermath of the Yom Kippur War. It is probable that new ideas, fertilized

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MESSAGE OF THE LEAKED MINUTES

For a dozen years we here at The Nation *have pressed our noses against the White House gate, looking pensively at what we presumed to be the home of the choicest news. For that many years we have been barred from entry because the Secret Service deemed our reporter a potential threat to the President.*

Thus, we were convinced, glamour of all sorts was being denied us. Scoops galore were beyond our reach; leaks from the mighty were destined to fall on other ears. To be sure, we had heard from some of the regulars in the White House press corps that covering that domicile day in and day out was excruciatingly tedious, especially under President Carter. Nevertheless, we were still convinced that, if only we had the access, some fabulous secrets could be pried out of the place.

Now we know better. Into our hands have fallen copies of the minutes of the Cabinet's meetings from March 14, 1977, to March 13, 1978. Secrets in an official sense they may be; fabulous they certainly are not. If these records are a fair reflection of the President's and Cabinet's collective mentality, our bittersweet lesson from them is that we have wasted our time peering through the gate, for the real work in this world goes on outside the White House grounds.

Which is not to say that the minutes tell us nothing about this administration; what they tell, rather, falls considerably short of inspiring as Robert Sherrill, et al. will now demonstrate.

ROBERT SHERRILL

Carter and his crowd spend an amazing amount of time poring over newspapers or sitting and staring at television shows, and then talking about them. Oh my, they are sensitive to ballyhoo. Minutes of Monday, April 25, 1977: "The President said that he regretted missing Dr. Schlesinger on *Face the Nation* yesterday, but he had watched the

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LETTERS

BHUTTO'S TRIAL

Washington, D.C.

The article by Ramsey Clark [*The Nation*, Aug. 19-26] is full of erroneous statements calculated to cast aspersions on the judicial process in Pakistan, prejudge a case which is before the Supreme Court and interfere in the internal affairs of Pakistan.

The peaceful takeover on July 5, in contrast to brutal violence and killings of overthrown personalities in other countries, and the rejection of a quick summary trial of those involved in the murder case show that the government is not interested in the elimination of personalities but the dispensation of justice. The murder conviction of Mr. Benigno Aquino in the Philippines, to which Mr. Clark referred, bears no comparison to the present case. Mr. Aquino was tried by a military court while Mr. Bhutto is being tried under the normal law in the civil courts.

The question is: should political leaders accused of murder not be tried under the law of the land?. . .The appeal in this criminal case is being heard in an open court and by judges who were serving in the Supreme Court or the High Courts under the regime headed by Mr. Bhutto. It is not a trial under martial law or even a specially constituted tribunal. The accused have been given full facilities of legal defense and Bhutto's lawyers presented the case for fifty-seven days which was fully reported in the press. . . .Even Mr. Bhutto's lawyer has acknowledged the fairness of the proceedings and has thanked the Supreme Court for "its exceptional kindness, consideration and a very patient hearing." Mr. Clark also acknowledges that "the nine judges engage in a meticulous review of the record. They are impressive men, learned in the law and skillful in their examination of the trial transcript."

Yet, instead of letting these "impressive and learned men" decide the case, Mr. Clark has arrogated to himself the role of defense, prosecution and judge. He has said that the Chief Justice of Lahore High Court, which sentenced the accused to death was "an old enemy who had heard Bhutto's case when he was arrested in 1968." He should therefore have been disqualified. The fact is that in 1968 the High Court, of which this judge was a member, came to the rescue of Mr. Bhutto and his associates. In December 1968, the Court ordered the release of one of Mr. Bhutto's associates, Mr. Khar. Sensing the trend of the Court, the then government released Mr. Bhutto. This evoked expressions of satisfaction from the Court of which the now Chief Justice of Lahore High Court was a member. In any case the Supreme Court which is seized of this and many other points and whose members have been extolled by international jurists, can be expected to make a fair and honest determination of this as well as other aspects of the case. The Supreme Court is fully competent to uphold, set aside or to commute the sentence awarded by the High Court.

The doomsday scenario drawn up by Ramsey Clark is a futile exercise in speculation. There is peace in the country. The government of Pakistan has announced that elections will be held by October 1979 and power will be transferred to civilian hands. The future of States or indeed of democracy does not depend upon the fate of single individuals. The judicial process and rule of law cannot imperil the future of States.

Khalid Ali, Press Counsellor
Embassy of Pakistan

BHUTTO'S RECORD

Pepper Pike, Ohio

Ramsey Clark's article on Pakistan perceptively highlights some of the problems facing the current military regime there, and the catastrophic consequences which might ensue from the execution of Z.A. Bhutto. Bhutto continues to command a great deal of support in Pakistan and abroad, and he has become a symbol of civilian opposition to oppressive military rule; still, Clark's portrait of Bhutto as a liberal and enlightened statesman is not, I feel, borne out by his record. In the economic sphere, Bhutto's reckless spending. . .and his general mismanagement contributed to the 30 percent average inflation rate during his rule. Further, his involvement in the sordid Bangladesh war, the murderous war he waged in Baluchistan, the repression and intimidation of opposition parties, and the unabashed rigging of the last elections testify to his contempt for democracy. Finally, his celebrated reforms were either, like the land ceilings, so full of loopholes as to be ineffective or, like his subsidies of agricultural machinery, designed, in effect, to help the wealthy landlords at the expense of the peasants. While the reactionary and repressive character of the present regime may enhance Bhutto's image by comparison, let us not forget that he is at heart a self-interested man.

Zahir Anwar

SUBSIDIZING THE KIDNAPPERS

Philadelphia, Pa.

Dr. Domingo Laino, vice president of the Radical Liberal Party of Paraguay, recently visited the United States after an invitation from the Washington Office on Latin America, a church-affiliated organization. On July 5, he returned home and we have since heard that he was detained by government agents and is being held incommunicado, was tortured and may even be dead.

Dr. Laino came to the United States to urge the U.S. Government to stop all economic aid to Paraguay, aid which sustains and maintains government under Stroessner alive. He came to protest against the Paraguayan Government which has been guilty of violating every human right conceivable and is responsible for the genocide of its forest Indians.

The Paraguayan situation, as well as Dr. Laino's present ordeal, has received scant coverage in the American press. The two questions I would like to raise with regard to the above are: (*1*) What is our government doing about Dr. Laino's kidnapping; and (*2*) Why does the United States continue to subsidize governments which engage in atrocities not significantly distinguishable from totalitarians of the Nazi and Soviet variety?

Ilana Rahabi

THANKS!

Honolulu, Hawaii

Bravo to Peter Connolly and *The Nation* [July 22-29] for Proposition 13 article!

John Maybury

CODE WORDS

Baltimore, Md.

When the argument over equal rights for women degenerates over the meaning of words, i.e., mankind versus humankind, the battle is being lost [Letters, *The Nation*, July 1].

I was always under the impression that the fight was being waged over issues such as equal pay for equal work, promotion by ability, first-class citizenship and the like. . . . If too many of the ladies permit the battle to become one of semantics, they certainly do not need a time extension to lose the war; they have lost it already.

Only if women in sufficient numbers go to the polls and vote against those people who have by their actions proved to be the enemy, will they win their case, regardless of the meaning of code words.

Henry Nordin

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EDITORIALS.

Black and White

With this issue we present our readers with the seventh format change in *The Nation*'s 113-year history. Perhaps because our founders and proprietors have always believed that a magazine should look like what it does, change has been part of our our tradition.

Many magazines give themselves a face-lift in an effort to achieve a new image, to win the packaging race, to outslick the competition, to anticipate the latest vogue in typography. Maybe because we have been around so long our own redesign goals are less ambitious: to capitalize on our most cherished asset, our identity; to underline our commitment to content.

Basically, we believe time is on our side, that in the rapidly changing communications game, publications such as *The Nation* which place substance ahead of image may become the last resource of a free press.

Thus the latest *Nation*, redesigned by Walter Bernard and Milton Glaser in consultation with all the persons who help produce our magazine, resists the temptation to go glossy. As Ralph Shikes writes in *The Indignant Eye*, "The starkness of black and white is often more appropriate for social message than is the sensuousness of color." Our "new" logo, including the definitive period at the end of our name, was borrowed from *The Nation*'s first issue, published in 1865. Our decision to begin our stories at the beginning—on the cover—is at once a tribute to our heritage, an unspoken announcement that reading *The Nation* involves a degree of intellectual commitment, and it has the added advantage of increasing the amount of text we can print in an issue.

As *The Nation* said when it changed its format in 1936, "We hope that the physical changes will produce the effect that was intended, namely, one of clarity, vigor and legibility." In other words, to quote the lawyers, *res ipsa loquitur*—the thing speaks for itself.

It is with particular pleasure that we are also able to announce some distinguished additions to our masthead. These include an Editorial Board, whose members will advise us from the perspectives of their varied expertise on matters of policy. Members include James Baldwin, Norman Birnbaum, Richard Falk, Frances FitzGerald, Philip Green, Sidney Morgenbesser, Aryeh Neier, Marcus Raskin, A.W. Singham and Alan Wolfe.

Robert Sherrill, our former Washington Editor

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who recently won a lawsuit invalidating the Secret Service's attempt to exclude him from its premises, returns as our White House Correspondent, of which title he writes: "By accepting that title, I am taking nothing that anyone else with a jot of intelligence would want, for the White House is the *last* place in Washington to get news."

The Money Tree

Not every winner in 1978's depressing primary season bought his victory, but money played a peculiarly unpleasant role and it will be worse in the November general election. For instance, Minnesota's Rep. Donald Fraser who represents what is still healthy in the Democratic Farmer Labor Party was beaten by Robert Short, a millionaire who ran against taxes, abortion and the environment, shelling out $693,000 of his own in that effort.

In some of New York's Congressional primaries, voters were costing $10 and more a head, though the money spent by the various scions was not the old-fashioned "walking around" cash of Election Days past; it went for computers, air time and the other techniques of the modern election-riggers. Voter turnouts were low almost everywhere. The public is "turned off" by the extravagant devices of modern campaigning, all aimed at avoiding issues and substituting manipulation.

The illusory nature of electoral "reform" is most vividly illustrated by the case of the dreadful Sen. Jesse Helms of North Carolina. The $1,000 limit on individual political contributions is on the books, to be sure, but the ultra-and-arch-reactionary Helms has gathered more than *$5 million* to aid him against a Democrat who says he will spend a mere $300,000. Helms has sucked up this fortune (the largest ever for a Senate race) through virtuoso use of right-wing mailing lists aimed at all the single-interest constituencies of the Right (abortion, gun control, etc.).

These modern special-interest groups are smashing the electorate to smithereens with their blizzards of small-denomination checks, making it the easier for the flourishing political action committees of the business world to buy and sell the makers of our laws. The only defense against this fragmentation would be a revival of the political parties, complete with policies and programs, but there is no sign of that in the offing. It is the Republicans, as a party, who are suffering more from this centrifugal phenomenon—their traditional Big Business supporters find it more profitable to buy causes and incumbents (mostly Democratic) than to support the GOP.

What follows from all this amounts to a further corruption of the political process. The astonishing success of the Proposition 13 sentiment is proof enough. It is not a movement but a wave of feeling, with all the illogic that implies (cut taxes but keep "services"—for the prosperous, not for the poor). It is not over-optimistic to suggest that there will be a revulsion of mood against this nastiness, aided by the evidence that reductions in services will also afflict the comfortable. Meanwhile, the politicians all march to the sound of the greenback drummer.

A Beginning

Whether or not "a marvelous thing" was accomplished at Camp David (as *The Washington Post* wrote on September 19,) it was the beginning of something substantial that was not there before. For that result, whatever may follow, President Carter and his persistent colleagues deserve great credit.

So, of course, do Begin and Sadat, even as they begin to distance themselves from the euphoric first readings of the Camp David documents and to address their qualifications to their real constituencies. Those are the clashing factions in Israel and the warring ones in the Arab world. They are the elements that will decide whether even the next step will be taken toward peace in the Middle East.

These cautionary words are not meant to take credit from the summiteers of the Catoctin heights. They struggled to translate the ideas of security, honor and dignity from abstractions into concrete acts of accommodation. The least that can be said is that they started a new process in a region whose recurrent wars have kept life itself constantly at stake.

The obvious flaw in the agreements is that they do not solve the Palestinian problem. But one must immediately add that if any attempt had been made to "solve" that one, there would have been no agreement at all. A solution to the Palestinian problem lies down the road—a road whose direction may well have been charted at Camp David.

Of the American involvement there it can be said that nothing would have happened if the President had not insisted on trying. The United Nations, for instance, could not have done it. It took a major power, one with a stake in the outcome and credit with both sides, to get things moving even a short distance. The United States had to increase its commitment to Israel in the form of two U.S.-built air bases to replace those lost with the Sinai. It is likely that there will be further American commitments, running to both the Israelis and the Arabs. Our feet, perhaps inevitably, are sinking deeper into the sands of the Middle East.

Mr. Carter made a striking appearance on the world's stage. It lacked that obsession with the appearance of virility which, in retrospect, mars the "peace-making" of Richard Nixon and the Cuban missile confrontation of John F. Kennedy. That, too, offers ground for hope as all the participants prepare to take the steps that must follow from Camp David.

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(Continued from Front Cover)

by the shock of the war, were already gestating, but the birth was slow. Then Sadat appeared in Jerusalem and, whatever his failure at negotiations, a kind of intellectual awakening was his unintended offspring.

It did not happen at once. What could be felt at first was a high-pitched, almost mindless, euphoria, followed almost inevitably by depression when it seemed that the magic moment had passed and all was lost. Finally, the notion struck that Israel had never grasped the implications of peace, and ideas began to tumble forth. They are still doing so.

On the night before Begin's departure for Camp David, I attended the huge rally in Tel Aviv's municipal plaza of Peace Now, a nonorganization of people with little in common except the conviction that peace is better than territory. The police admitted to 40,000 people at the rally; the sponsors said there were 100,000. Accepting the police figures, at the same ratio to total population there would have been 3 million people in the plaza had the demonstration been in America. No anti-Vietnam rally ever drew nearly that many.

Within the crowd, I detected the optimism of America in the mid-1960s, when it was still assumed that the utter logic of peace made peace inevitable. I have no way of knowing whether in a few years, bitterness and cynicism will prevail here, too.

Most of those in the crowd that hot summer night were young. Almost all the faces were European, rather than Oriental. A disproportionate number had come from the kibbutzim in Galilee, where the socialist and secular traditions remain strong. But substantial groups came also from Jerusalem, Haifa and the other major cities.

If there was a single dominant group in the plaza, it was composed of men in their late teens and early 20s, those who will fight the next war, if there is one. Some were in uniform, and an Israeli politician who recognized them told me that a number of the soldiers who conducted the raid on Entebbe were present in civilian dress.

The military elite is strong in Peace Now. In fact, the movement's early impulse came from a letter to Begin from 350 officers and soldiers, who urged on him a more flexible negotiating policy. More recently, a group of reservists wrote the Prime Minister to say that they would not defend his West Bank settlements in a future war. Though it seems unthinkable to Israelis that their soldiers would defy orders, that letter sent shock waves through the country. At the least, it contained a serious message that these young men have had their eyes opened to the prospects of peace.

When the first Peace Now rally was held early in the year, it encountered a kind of McCarthyite reaction from some quarters of Begin's government. The country reacted angrily against that response, and the Peace Now people are today seen for what they are, decent and concerned citizens of unmistakable patriotism. Right-wing harassment has largely stopped and, though religious zealots stoned the Peace Now caravan before it left Jerusalem on Saturday afternoon, they claimed that their objection was not to the politics of peace but to the violation of the Sabbath.

It is true that few of the tens of thousands on Tel Aviv's municipal plaza voted for Begin's Likud Party last year, or would be likely to vote for it now. Begin's political backbone seems to be the Oriental Jews, with their strong tradition of hostility to Arabs, and there is little political gain available to him among the pro-peace forces. Still, in a society as tightly knit as Israel, no government could turn its back on such an outpouring of feeling, lest the solidarity essential to Israel's posture toward the world be shattered. Peace Now will not make policy as long as Begin runs the government, but it is a major force of which he must take account.

It is hard to see how Begin can fail to take into account a no less spectacular event that occurred while he was at Camp David. It was a meeting sponsored by New Outlook, a tiny Israeli organization which for decades worked in vain to provoke consideration of Israeil-Arab co-existence. Last November New Outlook sponsored the first conference of Jews and Palestinians ever to be held in Israel, but no one of note attended from the West Bank. Ironically, the meeting was upstaged by Sadat's visit.

The latest meeting, held in an East Jerusalem hotel, attracted some of the most important political figures on the West Bank: the Mayors of Bethlehem, Hebron, Ramallah and Halhul; several members of municipal councils, university professors and other notables. On the Israeli side were five members of the Knesset, and some of the country's most prominent intellectuals. The Palestinians who were present had to withstand considerable pressure from local radicals, and a few who were invited did not show. The Israelis, though freer, also exposed themselves to noisy criticism. In all, some forty men and women met around the table.

Since tensions would be high enough at the meeting, it was decided not to make them higher by admitting journalists. However, since I had attended the New Outlook conference in Tel Aviv last year, I was invited to sit in. The meeting began slowly, the two sides dancing around each other, jabbing warily with platitudes. These sparring partners, were, for the most part, rather left-wing Israelis, who had in the past made some kind of commitment to Arab-Jewish reconciliation, and rather moderate Arabs, whose presence constituted in itself a statement that it was time to get on with co-existence. Then the dam of restraint broke, and during the ensuing hours of volubility I was astounded by what a revelation the talk was to both sides. Each of them knew almost nothing about the other, or of how the other thought they might live in peace together.

The Palestinians seemed unable to understand why the Israelis were obsessed by security, when their own perception was of an Israel that was not only the occupier of their lands but a genuine superpower in the Middle East, before which all Arab states cowered. The Israelis seemed unable to

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SECOND THOUGHTS

CAREY McWILLIAMS

August 1979 will mark the tenth anniversary of "the battle of the Bogside" in Derry. It has been a decade of senseless violence and brutality. Nearly 2,000 people have been killed and thousands injured. Torture, bombings, assassinations, mass arrests and internments have been the order of the day. But several recent developments offer some mild hope for the future.

One has been the eloquent and courageous plea of a handful of women in Northern Ireland ("The Committee of the Peace People") for an end to the bloodshed and violence. This plea has drawn worldwide applause, but little affirmative response in Northern Ireland. Moral exhortations of this kind are unlikely to have practical effect as long as they remain unrelated to a feasible political program.

Still another useful development was the report of Amnesty International in May on the brutality practiced against both Republicans and Loyalist prisoners at the Castlereagh detention center in Belfast. It also attracted international attention and the British announced that a private inquiry would be conducted into the charges. But a private inquiry, even if the findings were to be released, is not the equivalent of an open public inquiry.

Yet another encouraging sign has been the stand taken by Prime Minister John Lynch on his visit to Washington in May—a position endorsed by the leaders of the two minority parties in the Republic of Ireland. A settlement in Northern Ireland, they say, cannot be imposed. To quote Mr. Lynch: "The last ten years have shown us all that a violent victory by one side over the other in Northern Ireland, be it a Nationalist or a Unionist victory, would only breed further violence . . . . No substitute for agreement between the Irish people will work. No substitute for consent will last." Praise for this statement from such Irish-American leaders as Speaker Thomas O'Neill, Sen. Edward Kennedy and Gov. Hugh Carey has been useful. The difficulty is that "power-sharing" based on "mutual consent" cannot work on a significant scale as long as power is the point at issue. The Protestant majority—roughly 2 to 1—will not make significant concessions while it can rely on "the British shield" to shore up its power.

That "British presence" has been an enormous burden to the peoples of Ireland, North and South, and of Great Britain. Today the morbid fear of the Protestant majority—a minority within Ireland as a whole—of engulfment and "papist" dominance has become a bit less hysterical, thanks to the stand taken by Mr. Lynch. Also agricultural interests in Northern Ireland are beginning to feel that it might be well to join with the South to secure larger European markets for Irish farm products at better prices. And recently a group calling itself the International Tribunal on the British Presence in Ireland has announced that it will hold an open inquiry in London sometime in October to air every aspect of the British presence. A larger meeting would then be held in London around Easter to report the Tribunal's findings. The group's sponsors include eleven Labour M.P.s as well as such well-known names as Sartre, de Beauvoir and Marcuse. Not much is known about the organization and its legitimacy needs to be more clearly established. But, if properly conducted, without too much twisting of the lion's tail, the hearings could help convince the government of the need to conduct, under impeccable independent auspices, its own public inquiry.

These are hopeful signs but the crux of the problem in Northern Ireland is in the "settlement" of 1921 which carved out a six-county semicolonial enclave where a Protestant majority was assured of continued British support in its dominance of the Catholic minority. Religious division is not per se the basic problem. I was in Derry the morning after the 1969 riots (see *The Nation* August 25, 1969) and neither there nor in Belfast did I hear much discussion of religion. But I heard endless complaints from Catholics about discrimination in jobs, housing and voting rights. Indeed it was the U.S. civil rights movement that touched off the civil rights movement there, and the fear that it might succeed triggered the violence. In effect, the British commitment of 1921 bred political arrogance masked as religious bigotry; it encouraged Protestants to play top dog in a small kennel. Not surprisingly, the majority set about "encouraging" Catholics to move South or to emigrate, the better to create a nearly total Protestant enclave that would prevent for all time the unification of North and South. Gerrymandering weakened the minority's position; discrimination against it became a matter of official policy. When in 1973 the British were finally forced to step in and supersede local authorities, the councils they set up reflected the existing power ratio and little has changed.

Before the factions can agree, the Catholic minority must be able, free of coercion, to elect its fair share of representatives in districts that have not been gerrymandered to their disadvantage: in a word, full civil rights. Then, the British must indicate a willingness and intention to stage a phased withdrawal. Precipitous withdrawal might lead to further violence. But a basic condition to unraveling the tangle the British created must be their willingness to *begin* a reassessment of the brutal consequences of the "settlement" imposed in 1921. And the British need the pressure of world opinion to proceed, for they have always made a point of honoring their commitments—including those they should never have made.

The distinguished British historian, G.M. Young, once called Ireland "the great failure" of British history. As he saw it, the essence of the failure was that what the British could never remember, the Irish could never forget. Now this great historical "disaster" has been corrected for most of Ireland. The time has come to complete the process.

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grasp that, for a Palestinian, the right of self-determination superseded every other claim, or to credit the assertion that Palestinians not only felt threatened by Israel but had experienced the lash of that threat, again and again.

"Israel's security deprives us of our own," said Dr. Nafez Nazzal of Birzeit University in Ramallah, who freely acknowledged his admiration for the PLO. "The notion that Israel is insecure is a myth. You complain about the PLO covenant which vows Israel's destruction. True, the PLO has the covenant, but you have the land. Make us an offer, and you'll see what the PLO does."

"It is not a myth that Israel is destructible," answered Prof. Yehoshua Arieli of the Hebrew University. "Israel has maintained itself in three wars by the total mobilization of its resources. If it had not won these wars, it would have disappeared from the map. What is at issue for us Israelis here today is not the principle of self-determination but its practical application. If self-determination undermines the essential rights of others, if it endangers another state, it must be carefully examined. Israel does assert its right of survival against the Palestinians' rights of self-determination."

And so, hour after hour, the two sides explored with increasing subtlety each other's fears, the justice of each other's grievances, and the prospect of reconciling the conflicts between one's right to security and the other's to self-determination.

"We have never before been able to look each other in the eye," said the celebrated Israeli novelist, Amos Oz. "For us, the Arab is nothing but an extension of the Cossack, raping and looting. For you, the Israeli is nothing but an extension of the white colonialists. The question is not only how we can change our views but how to act on them."

It is said—not least importantly by Sadat—that the opportunity to seize the peace will be brief, and that, once gone, it may not return in this generation. Given the political pressures in the world, Sadat may be right but, if he is, it will be a misfortune. I believe a new orientation toward peace is evolving in Israel after decades in which all change was interpreted as compromise and all compromise as weakness. I suspect this evolution is taking place in the Arab world as well. The negotiators for Israel and Egypt have a responsibility to show progress, but the Middle East has waited thirty years for peace. Their efforts should not be judged as bitter failure if they cannot realize peace in a moment.

ARTICLES

BIG BROTHER FROM GEORGIA?

The Capacity To Spy On Us All

DAVID BURNHAM

President Carter has won acclaim for his criticism of the abuses of human rights in other nations, but here in America he has moved to increase the federal government's control over individual citizens. These latter actions, working together, would substantially increase the power of such agencies as the FBI, the CIA and the National Security Agency, and would pose new threats to the constitutional guarantees of freedom of speech and association.

The range of initiatives in support of more intrusive government is astonishing. The Carter administration has prosecuted two men in a case which, if upheld by the Supreme Court, could result in an American version of Britain's Official Secrets Act. The administration has sought to give the FBI a computerized information system that a range of officials in the Ford administration had contended might lead to a national police force. It has recommended legislation that would immunize federal officials from such civil suits as the one Morton Halperin has brought against Henry Kissinger for wiretapping his home telephone without a warrant.

There is no evidence that the administration's scattered actions are part of some master plan, reminiscent of Richard Nixon's program to punish his enemies and use the threat of government regulation to extract large contributions from big business. They seem, rather, to be the product of inexperienced and inept officials swimming along on a tide of technology, in some instances with guidance from career civil servants who seek to increase their power.

While the responsible officials in the Justice Department and White House offer reasoned defenses for each of the actions taken during the last twenty months to tighten the grip of the federal government, their collective impact raises grave questions about both the competence and the foresight of the Carter administration. Is it possible that Big Brother could be a sincere peanut farmer from Georgia?

The individual issues, and the responses of the Carter team, are complex, but here, in summary fashion, are instances in which the decisions appear to favor a strengthening of big government or a failure to deal with a recognized abuse by big government.

Humphrey-Truong. On July 6, Ronald Humphrey and David Truong each was sentenced to fifteen years in prison on their conviction as spies for Vietnam. To make the government's case, FBI agents opened sealed envelopes and used hidden surveillance cameras, methods that had been per-

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sonally approved by Mr. Carter. The investigation was supervised by Atty. Gen. Griffin Bell and the highest officials in the CIA and State Department.

Three major civil liberties issues are raised by the administration's handling of this case, and each of them is expected to be covered in the appeals by Mr. Humphrey, a former official in the United States Information Agency, and Mr. Truong, a Vietnamese graduate student.

First, if the conviction of the two men is upheld, it will be the first time that the federal government has won approval from the Supreme Court for the use of evidence gained from warrantless electronic surveillances in the criminal prosecution of a national security case. A senior State Department official told Nicholas M. Horrock of *The New York Times* that the Carter administration had brought the Humphrey-Truong case as "a test of Presidential power and nothing else."

A second effect of the case, again assuming that it survives appeal, will be to lower the legal hurdles the government must surmount before it can prosecute for espionage, one of the most serious of federal crimes. Espionage is defined as giving an enemy national defense secrets with the intent to damage the United States. While most previous espionage cases have centered on documents containing the most serious kinds of information, such as plans for the atomic bomb, the material in the Humphrey-Truong case comprised a few dozen diplomatic cables, most of them classified "confidential." So unimportant were they that the first assessments by the State Department and CIA concluded that they contained "little of a sensitive nature."

A third potential effect of the case is that it could establish by judicial fiat an Official Secrets Act in the United States. In addition to espionage, Mr. Truong and Mr. Humphrey were convicted of stealing United States property under a statute usually applied to a clerk caught swiping a typewriter. In this and a handful of other cases, including that of Daniel Ellsberg, however, the government contended that information worth more than $100 had been stolen. Defense lawyers argued that information cannot be equated with tangible property and that by presuming to do so the government is engaging in thought control.

One other aspect of the conviction of the two men under this larceny law is that the statute makes it a crime both to steal and receive stolen property. Thus, the Humphrey-Truong case could establish a precedent for prosecuting both government officials who leak embarrassing information and reporters who receive it.

Early in September the Carter administration's Justice Department sent out a policy statement which in a backhanded way supported the concern about possible abuses of the theft of property law. The memorandums said it would be "inappropriate" for United States Attorneys to use the law to prosecute either "whistle blowers" or newsmen who received an unclassified government document "primarily for the purpose of disseminating it to the public." But such policy statements can be unmade as easily as they can be made, once the application of the law has been upheld by the courts.

FBI Computer. For the last five years, the FBI has sought approval of a plan to purchase additional computer capacity that would establish the bureau as the central switching point for inquiries and responses between the states regarding the criminal histories of wanted persons. This so-called "message-switching" ability would be an expansion of the FBI's existing National Crime Information Center and Computerized Criminal History System.

In 1974 John Eger, acting director of the White House Office of Telecommunications Policy under President Ford, wrote a letter to then-Atty. Gen. Edward H. Levi warning that the FBI plan could lead to the creation of a national police force. The Office of Management and Budget, the Domestic Council's Committee on Privacy and several Democratic members of Congress also opposed the plan. Mr. Levi then announced that he was halting what had become a controversial program, pending passage of federal legislation on the kinds of information that could be stored in FBI computers. Congress has not yet resolved this matter.

The Carter administration, however, did not feel bound by the decision of the Republican Attorney General. In June 1977 the Justice Department authorized the FBI to develop its expanded computer. This created a small storm of controversy among a band of liberal Democrats, led by Rep. John E. Moss (Calif.). Attorney General Bell thereupon backed down. In March and April 1978 he and FBI Director William Webster testified that no further action would be taken on the matter without the knowledge and approval of Congress. At about the same time, the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment concluded in a preliminary study that the FBI's expansion plans posed far-reaching questions about individual privacy and the power of the federal government. The office then embarked on a full-scale analysis of these issues.

Despite the promises of Mr. Bell and Mr. Webster, the strong reservations of the Office of Technology Assessment, and the outright opposition by some members of Congress, the FBI last July informed two Senate staff members that it had won official approval to install message-switching capacity to link the bureau's field offices, a capacity the staffers contend could later be easily transferred to the National Crime Information Center. This latest FBI initiative now appears to have been halted by an amendment to the Justice Department's appropriation bill, but the uneasy impression remains that the Carter administration's consistent position has been to favor an expansion of FBI power.

Frank Snepp. On the same day that Mr. Humphrey and Mr. Truong were sentenced to prison for espionage and theft of government information, a federal judge ruled that a former officer of the CIA had violated his contract with the government by

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publishing a book about the agency which had not been authorized by the CIA, but which also contained no classified information. The judge ordered the former officer, Frank W. Snepp III, to turn over to the government the "ill-gotten gains" realized from the sale of his book.

Because many agencies, including the State Department, the Energy Department, the Defense Department, the Treasury Department and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, require employees to sign agreements restricting the disclosures they will make when leaving government, the administration's successful civil suit against Mr. Snepp represents a significant increase in the power of the government to suppress dissent. "No American should be deprived of his freedom of speech simply because he criticized the government," Mr. Snepp has said.

Pen Register. On February 19, 1976 the FBI approved a warrant to place a device, the "Pen Register," on two telephones used by a gambler known as T. Hamilton at 220 East 14th Street in New York City. The Pen Register records the numbers that are dialed on the telephone. Under the procedures still in force, legal restrictions on police use of the device are far less stringent than those required to install a tap to record secretly a telephone conversation.

Concerned about the use and abuse of Pen Registers by law-enforcement agencies, AT&T decided to challenge the legality of the FBI request for the installation on 14th Street. The company lost the case in the Federal District Court, but the U.S. Court of Appeals approved the right of the New York Telephone Company to refuse to assist the FBI in placing the Pen Register.

When the case was argued before the Supreme Court, however, the administration submitted a brief opposing this new restriction on electronic surveillance. The Supreme Court several months ago ruled in favor of the Carter administration and the FBI.

Electronic Surveillance. In 1976, the Senate Intelligence Committee disclosed that the National Security Administration had developed files on 75,000 Americans by secretly recording a large proportion of the cablegrams and other electronic messages crossing the borders of the United States. That highly secret branch of the Defense Department later informed Congress that it had destroyed the intelligence files, but NSA still uses its massive system of computerized listening devices to operate what has been called an "electronic vacuum sweeper."

In response to disclosures in 1975 and 1976 of widespread abuses by all of the intelligence agencies, first Ford's administration and then Carter's proposed complex legislation which is now called the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978. The bill is intended to set the rules under which the intelligence agencies may conduct some kinds of electronic surveillance. For the first time, for example, judicial warrants would be required in national defense cases aimed at specific persons.

But the Carter administration has made far broader claims for the legislation. "For the first time in our society the clandestine intelligence activities of our government will be subject to regulation and will receive the positive authority for all to inspect," Mr. Bell testified at one hearing.

Perhaps because of ignorance, or perhaps for other reasons, Bell's statement is incorrect. The legislation, while dealing with electronic surveillance aimed at specific persons, will have absolutely no effect on the NSA's continued acquisition of the massive number of electronic messages entering and leaving the United States and the subsequent use of high-speed computers to select those messages the agency believes require special attention. Whatever the explanation, the failure of the administration's leading expert and spokesman on surveillance law to acknowledge this loophole or to offer a remedy for it is a serious blemish on the Carter record.

Federal Tort Claims Act. One year ago, the Justice Department drafted legislation to amend the Federal Tort Claims Act. One effect of the proposal was to immunize from civil suits federal officials who have violated a citizen's constitutional rights—or, as Attorney General Bell chose to describe it, "to protect federal employees from suits for money damages arising out of the performance of their duties."

In an unusual joint response, representatives from nine groups including the American Civil Liberties

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Union, the National Legal Aid and Defender Association, Common Cause, Public Citizen and the Project on National Security Studies and Civil Liberties wrote a letter denouncing the plan.

"It is astonishing to us that an administration which came to office promising to end an era of government lawlessness and official misconduct should now propose to insulate federal officials for their conduct—even where those officials willfully violate the constitutional rights of citizens," the protest said.

The administration has now offered to modify its proposal, but the essential purpose of the legislation has not been abandoned. "Sincere government employees now are inhibited in the performance of duties essential to the nation by the threat of vindictive lawsuits which, although seldom successful, always cost much time, money and peace of mind to defend," the administration argued in a recent defense of its plan.

An astounding feature of the bill is that if enacted, its effect would be retroactive. Henry Kissinger and the FBI agents who placed illegal microphones and telephone taps in the homes and offices of countless radicals would therefore be immune to the civil suits now pending against them.

The continuing power of the bureaucrats in pursuit of their organizational goals is astonishing. Again and again, the FBI's computer experts have simply ignored the negative decisions made by the theoretically responsive political appointees of two administrations.

Another example of this institutional persistence can be seen in the behavior of John L. Martin, deputy chief of the Internal Security Section of the Justice Department. Mr. Martin, a silent, never-smiling presence at the long Humphrey-Truong trial, was the department's coordinator of the prosecution. What is fascinating about his role in the single most important espionage case brought by the Carter administration is that just a few years ago he apparently played a similar part when Nixon and Kissinger tried unsuccessfully to prosecute Daniel Ellsberg in the *Pentagon Papers* case.

All governments, even those led by apparently well-intentioned people, require constant scrutiny. Woodrow Wilson, the Princeton professor who dreamed of world peace, was in the White House when the government launched a ferocious attack on political dissenters at the beginning of World War I. Franklin D. Roosevelt and Earl Warren collaborated in the totally unprecedented roundup and imprisonment of tens of thousands of Japanese-Americans at the beginning of World War II.

During the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, the FBI made hundreds of hours of illegal secret recordings of the private conversations of Dr. Martin Luther King. Richard Nixon made secret tapes of all his official conversations. Henry Kissinger had his secretary keep unannounced stenographic records of all telephone calls. Nixon's lieutenants did not hesitate to launch illegal break-ins of the Washington office of the Democratic National Committee and the Los Angeles office of a psychiatrist.

But at a time when advanced surveillance techniques, high-speed computers and other electronic devices make possible ever more intrusive invasions of individual privacy, the critical examination of every new government program must become even more rigorous. For while each individual step may be defended as only an insignificant addition to the machinery already in place, the combined force of these actions could at any time precipitate drastic changes in both the ability and the willingness of the American people to make independent choices about their future. □

GIVEAWAY OR BREAKTHROUGH

A Debate On TV Licensing

Giveaway to the networks or a new life for broadcasting? That argument, raised by the controversial Van Deerlin bill now before Congress, is debated below by Nicholas Johnson and Karl E. Meyer. The form employed is the usual one: each participant makes an opening statement, and these are followed by brief rebuttals. Nicholas Johnson, who chairs the National Citizens' Communications Lobby in Washington, served as an FCC Commissioner from 1966 to 1973. Karl Meyer is television critic for the Saturday Review.

The Communications Act of 1978 (H.R. 13015), named for Lionel Van Deerlin, chairman of the Subcommittee on Commmunications, where the legislation was written, provides for a number of adjustments in the relationship between public authority and the broadcasting monopolies. However, the source of contention is in two provisions: (a) *licenses to transmit will be granted in perpetuity; and* (b) *commercial networks will be "taxed" to provide a fund for the use of Public Broadcasting and to support minority stations and extend facilities into rural areas. Who stands to gain, who to lose, in this* quid *for* quo? *Is H.R. 13015 in the public interest? That is the subject of hearings on the bill that began on September 12 and the subject of our debate.*

NICHOLAS JOHNSON

A "giveaway"? I think that a modest characterization. The broadcasting industry's profits average about 100 percent a year on depreciated capital investment. Its net profit, as a proportion of gross, is four times that of the oil industry. These profits are made possible by the government-created and -protected monopoly that comes with an FCC license. Any attempt at "marketplace competition" on a broadcaster's channel is flirtation with the federal penitentiary. The only inhibition on the broadcaster's "license to print money" is the FCC's renewal process every three years—and the public rights attendant to this monopoly.

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H.R. 13015, the Van Deerlin bill, now proposes to keep the monopoly, keep the government protection, but remove all the public's rights and broadcasters' obligations. It grants licenses in perpetuity. If it seems a little outrageous that $600,000 worth of studios, cameras and transmitters can be worth $75 million today because of a three-year license, consider the joy in executive suites at the prospect of doubling or trebling that value.

It is hard to imagine the arguments in favor of the bill. Needless to say, network television has not given the American people much analysis of it. So *The Nation* has scheduled this exchange, and a subsequent rebuttal, to see if Karl Meyer can find any justification for the bill. At this point, not having seen his piece for this issue, I will start with fundamentals.

In a democratic society it is essential that the mass media be open, diverse, responsive and legally accountable to the public. Why? The answers seem obvious; it's like trying to explain why the right to vote in elections is thought important, or the presumption of innocence in criminal trials. And yet, extraordinary as it may seem, those are the kinds of fundamental issues raised by the Van Deerlin bill.

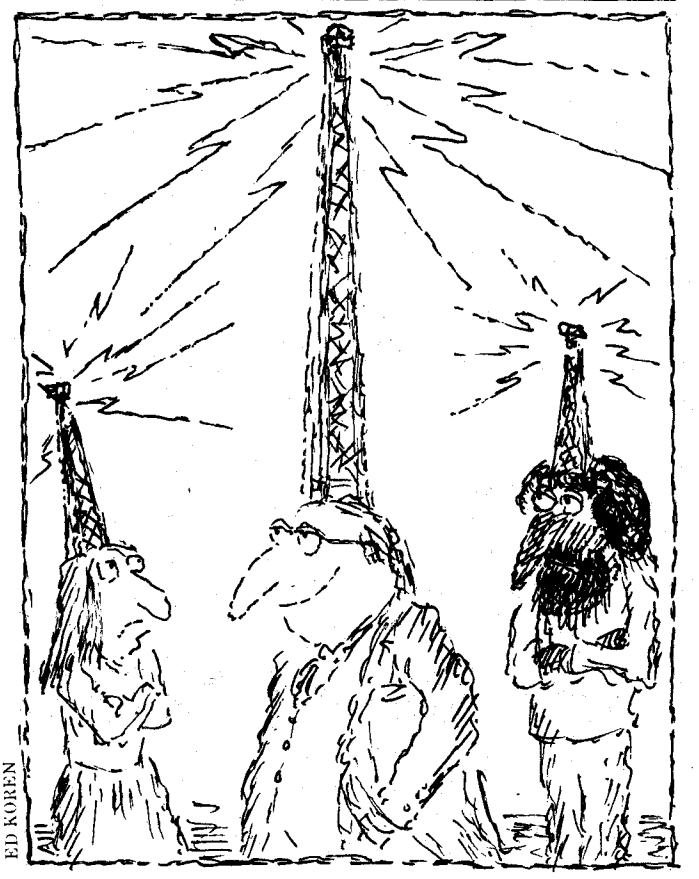
The current law provides that broadcasters are public trustees with no right of property in their frequencies or channels. They must provide news and public affairs programs regardless of profitability. They have special fair-employment responsibilities to minorities and women. They cannot use their awesome political power to silence candidates, or views on controversial issues, with which they disagree. The law does not permit the federal government to dictate specific program content (as distinguished from program categories) and the FCC has shown no inclination to do so.

The law gives the public legal rights. Broadcasters must make their public files available at all times. They must conduct a "community ascertainment" of their audience. Candidates can insist on "equal time." Anybody can file a "fairness complaint" with the FCC. And all can participate in the license renewal process every three years—and, therefore, conduct a *meaningful* dialogue with stations' management at any time.

Why do these public rights, and broadcaster limitations, make any difference in a democracy? Why can't we just let big business totally dominate the nation's communications system as it does other areas of our lives?

Put in its most fundamental terms, it is because a democracy rests on two principles of faith: *(1)* The common people, once adequately educated and informed, are capable of governing themselves. *(2)* The wisest public opinion and policy will emerge from an uncensored dialogue (a "marketplace of ideas") in which every citizen has an equal opportunity both to speak and to hear all views.

Both principles may be utter nonsense, but on them, to paraphrase Learned Hand, we have "staked our all." Unless Lionel Van Deerlin and Karl Meyer really want to argue for an alternative form of government, we can go on to address how radio and



television can best serve these two presumptions of a democratic society.

By the time the average television viewer is 65 years of age, he or she will have devoted nine full years to watching TV. Today, democracy's dialogue is going to take place on radio and television or it's not going to take place at all. Conversations after Sunday services, debates in the town hall, and occasional handbill campaigns just don't have the impact on society that they did 200 years ago.

Van Deerlin wants to substitute "marketplace forces" for government regulation. It's a goal I have often espoused, and even tried to implement, for other industries during my ten years as U.S. Maritime Administrator and FCC Commissioner. There are only two problems with attempts to apply it to broadcasting.

We do not now have a marketplace in broadcasting. Broadcasters and elected officials (who owe their political lives to broadcasters) have opposed all attempts to create a real marketplace (cable and pay TV, paid and free access to the airwaves, additional VHF stations, and so forth). Moreover, however well marketplace forces may be thought to regulate economic abuses, there is no reason to believe them effective in providing a free society with the full range of art, information and opinion necessary to its self-governing.

"Deregulating" a protected monopoly, while continuing the monopoly and the protection, does not create competition. It just creates an unregulated monopoly. We don't leave protection from contaminated water, or unsafe drugs, to "marketplace forces," and there's no reason to suspect better results from doing so in broadcasting.

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The ideas of television's marketplace are ideas about the odors of mouths and armpits—and praises sung to the politics and life styles of transnational conglomerate corporations. No, the ideas of the marketplace do not make a marketplace of ideas.

Big business has access to the airwaves—and it should. But if similar access is to be available to labor, education, religion, agriculture—in short, to the common people who are supposed to be governing this country—the Van Deerlin bill is, in a quite literal sense, one of the most un-American pieces of proposed legislation to be seen in a long time.

Of course it's an economic giveaway. That's obvious. But that's also the least of its faults. If this bill passes we'll lose far more from the Capitol than the gold on its dome. We'll have lost much of its foundation as well. □

KARL E. MEYER

I take it as a truism that American commercial television is still juvenile and embarrassingly delinquent, and that the prime concern of broadcasters is the packaging of audiences for delivery to advertisers. Our networks have been an unequivocal success in only one respect: coining money. In 1977 the three networks enjoyed pretax profits of $406 million, an increase of 37.4 percent over the previous year. (See *Broadcasting*, August 14.)

By contrast, public television, our best hope for assuring program diversity, subsists in the slums. In the current fiscal year, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting will spend about $15 million on national television programming. That is why PTV stations must beg for handouts from viewers and business underwriters.

The overriding merit of the proposed Communications Act of 1978 (H.R. 13015) is that it would narrow the gap between private affluence and public squalor. As drafted by the House Communications Subcommittee, of which Lionel Van Deerlin is chairman, the legislation would, for the first time, compel commercial broadcasters to yield up some of their profits to the public system. It is this point that is obscured in misleading and pietistic attacks on the Van Deerlin measure as an unconscionable giveaway.

The true giveaway was perpetrated in 1934 when the original Federal Communications Act turned over the public airwaves to commercial broadcasters without charging a penny. It was the equivalent of giving away oil-drilling rights on public property—in Great Britain, for example, commercial TV pays a substantial annual levy for use of the air. Under the Van Deerlin reform, a VHF TV station in New York would be subject to an annual fee of around $7.74 million and a UHF station would write a check for $2.063 million. (The figures are from a fee schedule compiled for discussion purposes by the House subcommittee. See *Broadcasting*, July 24.) Total annual revenues from all fees could rise as high as $700 million, and would be earmarked for public broadcasting, and for special funds to encourage minority station ownership and the expansion of services to rural areas.

To win passage of this basic reform, Van Deerlin has offered what I believe is a token concession to broadcasters—his bill envisions the eventual elimination of license renewal procedures for both radio and TV, and would modify troubling censorship formulas that give federal regulators the questionable right to meddle in program content. The public-spirited Nicholas Johnson, who once clerked for Mr. Justice Black, has some curious allies in his recent vehement attacks on Van Deerlin. Echoing Johnson, the Rev. Everett C. Parker, director of the United Church of Christ Office of Communications, calls the Van Deerlin rewrite "a bigger giveaway of public rights and property than Teapot Dome." It is certainly true that the proposed legislation would make it harder for inquisitorial watchdog groups to enroll the FCC in their censorship campaigns.

For example, no sooner had the Supreme Court upheld the right of the FCC to punish the broadcasting of four-letter words by Pacifica's WBAI/FM in New York than a Massachusetts outfit called Morality in Media filed a complaint with the FCC alleging that a Boston public television station was airing obscene and offensive material in [sic] Masterpiece Theatre and Monty Python's Flying Circus. (See *Broadcasting*, July 24.)

Anyone who takes the First Amendment seriously must be troubled by federal oversight of broadcasting. The peculiar status of radio and television was initially justified on the ground of scarcity, since technology imposed limits on the number of broadcasting frequencies. But today in every major city there are many more radio stations than newspapers, and new developments in television (satellite transmission, cable TV and improved tuners) promise a comparable proliferation of channels. The scarcity argument is increasingly hollow and untenable.

True enough, the Van Deerlin legislation would give radio stations permanent licenses and after a decade do the same for television. But what is being given away? In practice, the three-year renewal ritual is a charade, of benefit chiefly to the 800-odd lawyers accredited to the FCC bar. (Even an unchallenged TV license renewal can involve $90,000 in legal fees.) In 1976, a typical year, out of 2,995 renewal applications, 2,964 were promptly granted, and only one-fourth of 1 percent were denied. Denials have invariably arisen from fraudulent business practices, not from failure to meet standards of public service. (For details, see the admirable analysis in *Reluctant Regulators*, by Barry Cole and Mal Oettinger; Addison-Wesley, 1978.)

In theory, the FCC is supposed to uphold the public interest against the broadcasting industry; in practice, it has generally been the other way around, despite valiant reforming efforts by outstanding commissioners such as Frieda Hennock, Newton

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Minow and Nicholas Johnson. Perhaps the most visible contribution of the FCC has been to train two generations of lawyers as advocates for the broadcasting industry. (See Cole and Oettinger, *passim.*)

Under the Van Deerlin measure, the concept of public stewardship of television is preserved and citizen challenge of gross abuse by a station is possible at any time. Existing equal time and fairness doctrine formulas are replaced by a more general requirement of equitable treatment, and by the narrowing of equal time restrictions on TV to candidates for local office. No doubt these and many other features of an omnibus bill deserve rigorous discussion and may need improving amendments.

I am appalled, however, by the intemperate tone of liberal attacks on Van Deerlin. It is surely high time, in Dr. Johnson's words, to clear our minds of cant. The new legislation is "giving away" powers that have demonstrably failed to achieve their lofty purposes. These powers, moreover, open a quagmire of First Amendment questions, as in the Pacifica case. I cannot believe the Republic will be imperiled if we treat broadcasters more nearly like publishers of newspapers, books and magazines. With this proviso: that profits earned from junk television should help to underwrite a public system that may yet evolve into an American counterpart of the BBC. To give away the fiction of regulation for the actuality of real money for quality programming is no mean bargain. □

JOHNSON IN REBUTTAL

Having seen Karl Meyer's statement, this available space for response can scarcely do it justice. It is riddled with what are, to me, misstatements and faulty conclusions. Here's an example:

Mr. Meyer implies that Dr. Parker and I lead "inquisitorial watchdog groups. . .in censorship campaigns." I resent that and believe my record unblemished in support of public access, freedom for the creative community, and opposition to government and corporate censorship of program content. As Chairman of the NCCB I even urged that the "family viewing hour" was unconstitutional and won in the courts. It was the broadcasters who supported it.

That's personal. The rest misreads the bill.

Meyer cites the Supreme Court's recent *Carlin-WBAI* decision (banning seven dirty words) as argument for Van Deerlin's reform. Great. Has he read the bill? Section 417(a)(6) expressly makes "obscene, indecent or profane language" grounds for the *revocation* of one of those licenses in perpetuity! Neither the drafters of the 1934 Communications Act nor the modern-day "inquisitorial watchdogs" had urged that drastic a remedy. That's typical of Meyer's analysis.

What about the fee system? Meyer says it has been "obscured in misleading and pietistic attacks." Not from me it hasn't. I didn't mention it. Now that he has raised it, I will.

When I was an FCC Commissioner we instituted the broadcast industry's first significant fee system. We didn't have to rewrite the entire Communications Act to do it.

For Meyer to suggest the Van Deerlin fees will support the programs the bill describes is either a bad joke or deliberately misleading. The fees are for the new FCC, public broadcasting, providing rural America with cable TV, and minorities with funds to acquire stations! Such programs require multi-billion-dollar budgets, not millions. Even a 100 percent confiscatory tax on broadcasting couldn't make a down payment on, let alone complete, such programs.

Given the unsurpassed political power of broadcasters, it is unrealistic to think that they will not set the fees they will be paying to support public broadcasting. They already have an incentive to hold down appropriations. What chance would public broadcasting have for adequate funding if its budgets came directly from the profits of its commercial competitors?

And what are we being asked to give up for these trifling coins? What Meyer has the gall to call "a token concession." Well, this token concession happens to involve the total abandonment of broadcasters' public responsibility, repeal of the "public interests." That's quite a price.

Meyer says FCC regulations haven't produced much. Dozens of citizen-broadcaster agreements prove him wrong. It's not the *use* of the license renewal hearings; it's the *availability* of that process. Negotiated progress has been significant in employment, children's programming, public-service announcements, public affairs, format changes and fair treatment of issues. Earlier this month a children's programming agreement was announced by a group called "WATCH" in Washington. This agreement alone is reason enough for keeping these rights. One would think, if the FCC and public-interest standards were not performing adequately, the remedy would be to strengthen them, not abandon them. If that's too much to hope, let's at least hang on to what we have. To sell me on even more broadcasting power in exchange for a handful of inflated dollars, and the remote hope of some other technological solution ten or twenty years from now, is going to require a more persuasive carnival barker than I have as yet encountered. □

MEYER IN REBUTTAL

It is with despair and bafflement that I read Nicholas Johnson's cantankerous assault on the Van Deerlin bill. He wants more diversity in broadcasting. So does everyone else. But he totally ignores the license fee that the bill would impose on commercial broadcasting, thereby providing revenues that would encourage diversity without relying on regulatory doctrines that have proven feeble in practice and risky in theory.

I suggest that Johnson have a chat with one of his

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erstwhile allies, Henry Geller, who worked for fourteen years at the FCC, most of that time as general counsel. Geller has changed his mind about the benefits of the regulations that he for years tried earnestly to enforce. In a *New York Times* interview (July 18), Geller put it this way to Les Brown:

"If our goals are for more cultural, educational, and more minority services, we surely are not going to get them from commercial broadcasting. So why not let commercial broadcasters do what they do best, take the money from the licensing fee and apply it to the betterment of the public broadcasting system? That's one answer, and it also carries a First Amendment bonus."

Geller is frankly concerned with the First Amendment implication of federal regulation, which clearly does impinge upon program content. How can Johnson possibly argue that the FCC has shown no inclination to meddle in the wake of the Pacifica decision? Just what does Johnson mean by saying that all media should be legally accountable to the public? Is he proposing that the post office should license *The Nation* and create a Bureau of Magazine Standards to assure that William F. Buckley is given equal time in each issue? In reality, existing regulations provide a weapon for zealots as well as the high-minded to engage in shakedown maneuvers against radio and TV stations. Even when the high-minded triumph, the agreement may entail a questionable payoff to citizens' advocates—as was the case in New York City, when a $90,000 reimbursement was paid to those who campaigned against changing the classical music format of WNCN-FM. The cause was noble (I pledged $25 to help save WNCN) but the legal fee was outrageous. One of Johnson's most dubious votes as FCC Commissioner was in support of such reimbursement of petitioning groups. (See *Reluctant Regulators*, pp. 240-241.) And what the PTA does today the National Rifle Association, you may be sure, will do tomorrow. With large fees to lawyers.

Like Henry Geller, I believe that the Van Deerlin bill is a solid first step, though I am sure that it can be improved. Unlike Johnson, I do not believe that the incantation of populist slogans constitutes a real debate. We need to hear a case against the new communications act, but I'm afraid Nicholas Johnson has not even begun to make it. □

Carey McWilliams and His World. . .
A Celebration

The Nation, a new face and a great tradition, invites you to join in a salute to our former editor on Wednesday evening, November 29th at the Biltmore Hotel in New York City. Should you be considering a visit here try to make it coincide with this event. We believe it will be worth the trip.

Details will follow in a later issue. (For more information, call: 212/242-8400. Linda Eder Storrow, Co-Chairperson.)

PAWNS AND BISHOPS

Torture, Murder & A Church Divided

PENNY LERNOUX

The atmosphere in the church was tense. Crowded inside, several hundred young Brazilians had come to attend an afternoon Mass for a fellow student killed by the military police. Outside the church, stationed in the plaza and along the thoroughfares that crisscross this part of downtown Rio de Janeiro were soldiers from the First Division of the Brazilian Army.

Earlier in the week, after the first funeral Mass for the student, mounted police had attacked all those leaving the church. On the morning of this, the second Mass, the city had been alerted to a state of war, with machine-gun nests at the crossroads, armored cars, barbed-wire entanglements and aerial patrols. When the Mass drew to a close, the unarmed people inside the church would have to confront the military; there was nowhere to hide. Set in the middle of a large plaza/parking lot that straddles the Avenida Presidente Vargas, Candelaria is an unprotected island, with no narrow side streets or alleys for refuge. Surely, there would be more deaths this afternoon.

One of the priests forbade the congregation to leave the church ahead of the clergy. Dressed in alb and stole, the fifteen religious followed Bishop Castro Pinto to the doors of the church and then out into the plaza where, holding one another by the hand, they formed a line to confront a row of mounted military policemen with drawn sabers. Slowly, slowly, this strange procession forced the horses to retreat. The priests then moved down Presidente Vargas to Rio Branco Avenue, the crossroads of downtown Rio, forming a protective arc around Candelaria until the last person had left. It was only then, in the crossroads, that the cavalry and soldiers lashed into the crowd with their batons, hurling tear-gas grenades, but at least there was somewhere to flee, some place to hide.

"That afternoon," recalled one Brazilian journalist, "veterans and hardened campaigners of the press came back to their editorial offices, their voices full of emotion as they told of the miracle—of the massacre which had not taken place because a dozen priests offered themselves as the first victims. That afternoon the Church discovered a new dimension of grandeur which prompted a former priest, who is today a professional journalist, to say: 'That's how the Church should be! If I were not married with three children, I'd go straight back to my monastery.' "

The Candelaria incident took place in Rio de Janeiro in 1968. Since then, there have been countless instances of similar courage by priests, nuns and bishops, not only in Brazil but throughout

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Latin America. Though the setting and circumstances vary, such sacrifice invariably has been inspired by the motive that led Bishop Castro Pinto and his priests to confront the mounted police: to protect the people, to "give voice to the voiceless." As the list of Church martyrs grows in Latin America, one constantly hears the same biblical refrain: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

"Don't hit me again! Please don't hit me again!" The middle-aged peasant woman was sobbing, half slumped on the floor of the primitive jungle jail. For days now, she had been forced to kneel on jagged bottle caps while the police beat her with clubs and stuck needles and pins into her breasts and under her fingernails. Her niece, just recovering from childbirth, had been similarly tortured after the police, having gang-raped her, burned down her small shack and the family's rice patch. Everyone in the small village of Ribeirao Bonito could hear the women screaming, but they were too frightened to intervene. Here, as elsewhere in the Brazilian Amazon, the military police did as they pleased.

While many of the village's 1,000 inhabitants had been similarly abused, only one man, Jovino Barbosa, had dared to protest, and now his sister and daughter-in-law were paying. Barbosa had killed a police corporal, notorious in the region for his torture and murder of peasants, after he had jailed and brutalized Barbosa's two sons. A detachment of military police had been sent to the village to capture Barbosa, and when they could not find him, they arrested and tortured the two women.

By coincidence—the villagers say it was the hand of God—the Amazon's Bishop Pedro Casaldaliga and a Jesuit missionary, Joao Bosco Penido Burnier, stopped at Ribeirao Bonito to bless some baptismal water from the village river while en route from a regional meeting on Indian affairs, in another town. As they walked back from the river, a boy approached the bishop to tell him of the women who were being tortured. Casaldaliga immediately set off for the jail. As soon as he and Father Joao entered the police station, said Casaldaliga, two corporals and two soldiers began to harangue and insult them, threatening to kill the bishop. "We tried to talk calmly," he said, "but when Father Joao said he would inform the policemen's superiors of their undisciplined action, police officer Ezy Romalho Feitosa hit him and then shot Joao in the head."

Father Joao was the second Brazilian missionary to be murdered in the space of a few weeks in the fall of 1976. Had it not been for the prominence of his family, which included two generals in the Brazilian military, and his standing in the Jesuit community, the government would probably have dismissed his death as another case of Church subversives obstructing justice in the Amazon. Unlike Casaldaliga, who had had frequent run-ins with the military, he had not been tagged by the government for repression or harassment. Thus the regime could hardly write him off as a subversive, particularly when the entire Brazilian hierarchy was up in arms over his murder. To pacify the bishops, the government ordered the temporary

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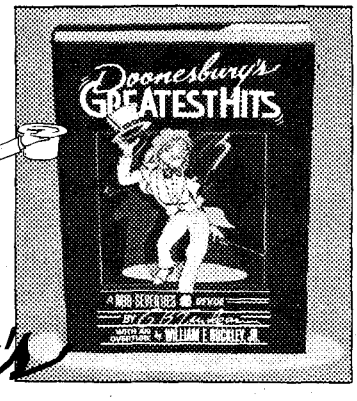

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arrest of the Ribeirao Bonito policemen. President Geisel also met with Burnier's cousin, Archbishop Geraldo Penido, to tell the hierarchy that he did not himself condone torture but that there was no way he could prevent his underlings from resorting to it.

ED KOREN

While Geisel was officially washing his hands of the matter, spontaneous justice was suddenly and violently exacted in Ribeirao Bonito. All the villagers were present for Burnier's funeral Mass, and many had come from nearby towns to witness what Bishop Casaldaliga called "a silent protest against the oppressors and the exploiters represented by the police who are responsible for so many injustices and so much of the people's suffering. Let this celebration make us. . .more conscious that it is ourselves, and only ourselves, who are going to attain our liberation."

When the Mass was over, the two women who had been tortured by the police led a procession to the now-empty jail where the people put up a cross with the inscription: "Here is where the police killed Father Joao Bosco, who was defending freedom."

But would the police not pull down the cross as soon as they returned? asked a peasant. Would they not desecrate Father Joao's memory, too? Carmosina Pereira, a middle-aged woman who had been imprisoned in the jail, began to shout: "Many innocent people have already been imprisoned here. Many people have suffered. The jail must be destroyed." Someone kicked at its walls; another slammed the door. Then, in a single movement, the villagers fell on the jail, literally tearing it apart with their hands.

Father Joao's cross still stands in Ribeirao Bonito—and a new church as well, built in his honor by the grateful villagers. It has become a shrine for settlers from other parts of the Amazon, who already revere Father Joao as a saint, and sing songs in his memory. But the repression and violence that caused his death also prevail.

On the first anniversary of Joao's murder, Casaldaliga, six fellow bishops, thirty priests, several dozen nuns, Protestant pastors and representatives of the Bororo and Bacairi Indian tribes gathered in Ribeirao Bonito to pay tribute to Burnier by inaugurating the humble village church. But the occasion was marred by the presence of a detachment of military police, who arrested a layman working with Casaldaliga as soon as the dignitaries had left the village. Unable to imprison Casaldaliga or his colleagues, the police derived some satisfaction from torturing an innocent man whose sole crime was his connection with the Amazon's bishop.

Very few of those now planting the seeds of a better society in the political desert of Latin America will live to see the fruit ripen. The possibility of political liberty remains a distant dream in many Latin American countries because the military is determined to stay in power till the end of the century. That is the future facing Chileans, Argentines and Brazilians. "I know no possibility of liberation in Latin America in this century," was the grim prediction of theologian Jose Comblin, a specialist in Latin American military affairs. "We have to look forward to twenty years of slavery."

This poses some hard decisions for the Catholic Church. If it is too critical of these governments, it runs the risk of losing the institutional structures on which much of its power rests and through which it communicates with the people. But if it is not sufficiently critical, it may lose the mass of the populace. The pros and cons of the issue have clearly divided the bishops and clergy between those who identify with a Church that in Latin America has always been allied with the wealthy classes, and those who have a new vision of the Church based on the Christian communities: the People of God. In a few countries, among them Brazil, there has been sufficient flexibility within the local Church to accommodate bishops who talk to generals and bishops who talk to the poor. Indeed, the latter recognized the importance of having someone in the Church who was respected and liked by the military. But Brazil is an exception.

If a head count were taken, it is unlikely that many Latin American bishops would accept Mexican Bishop Sergio Mendez Arceo's open support of Marxism, any more than they would approve of Brazilian Archbishop Geraldo Proenca Sigaud's public alliance with the military against the Brazilian bishops. These are the two extremes. In

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between is a sizable group of bishops who believe the Church should be concerned with social issues; they are the innovating minority who are shaping the consensus of the Church of tomorrow. There is also a floating faction that will sign documents, reactionary or radical, as long as the "experts" so decree, and a minority of intelligent, well-financed and organized, Vatican-supported conservatives who hope to thwart the progressives.

These conflicts came to a head in 1978 when the Latin American Church girded itself for a conference of the hemisphere's bishops, to be held in Puebla, Mexico. The conservatives had long urged such a meeting, but had been repeatedly blocked by more moderate Church leaders who believed such a convocation "inopportune." After the Vatican had approved the Puebla gathering, however, it was no longer possible to paper over the divisions.

In contrast to an earlier, similarly impressive conference at Medellin, the groundwork for which had been prepared by the progressives, the working documents for Puebla were written primarily by conservatives. So unsympathetic were these documents to the goals of Medellin that they caused an uproar within the Latin American Church.

No one argued with the theme of the documents, or with how the Church should evangelize Latin Americans in a period of rapid transition from an agrarian to an urban society. But the suggestion that the Church, merely by telling people to behave themselves, could produce a new Christian civilization in the midst of growing poverty and violence was, in the words of a Peruvian theologian, "simply incredible." Added another astonished theologian from Argentina: "Since when can one affirm that the word of God can be a substitute for food, proteins and calories? Can there possibly be a reversal that so mocks the infinite suffering of our people, of all those who have been kidnapped, tortured and murdered, and of our own martyrs?"

From across the continent, Chile to Brazil, Peru and Panama, came a rising chorus of indignation and dissent. The Brazilian hierarchy even went so far as to approve a radical counter-document firmly endorsing the original Medellin position.

Contrary to the pessimists' fears, however, the conflict that arose over the Puebla meeting is proving to be yet another source of constructive change within the Latin American Church. Criticism, to be meaningful, must be based on serious observation, and many bishops were discovering this when they studied the Puebla documents. Nor were the bishops the only ones to examine their consciences; in many countries the documents were reprinted by the thousands for redistribution to the Christian communities, so that laymen could form their own opinion. That had not happened after Medellin.

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"The progress of the People of God can be seen most visibly in the Christian communities," asserted the bishops of northeastern Brazil. "It is there that the coming of the Spirit, the new Pentecost, the baptism of Jesus by fire and by the Spirit can be palpably perceived. For this reason the message of the Puebla conference should be a recognition and thanksgiving for the abundant harvest and fruits of the Spirit: the act of thanksgiving of so many men and women who have awakened, thanks to Medellin, and who have begun to form an active People of God, destroying the chains of silence, cowardice, inertia and dead, traditional structures.

"We know the struggle will be a long one, requiring immense patience but also bearing immense hope. But precisely because liberation now seems much more remote and difficult than at the time of Medellin, the presence of the Church at the side of the poor and oppressed is more necessary." □

Leaked Minutes

(Continued from Front Cover)

energy industry representatives on *Meet the Press*."

June 13: "The President described a recent television show by Bill Moyers on CIA operations." Same meeting: "The President said that the full text of his remarks concerning Congress's recent action on the energy legislation began with a congratulatory comment which was overlooked in press accounts."

June 20: "Mr. Vance suggested that Cabinet members read an article by Peter Osnos on the USSR in yesterday's *Washington Post*."

June 27, 1977: "The NSC staff will hold an informal meeting on world hunger. . . . The President . . . reminded Cabinet members that this issue is the humanitarian project this year of the entertainment industry." Same meeting: "Mr. Blumenthal said that the recent *Washington Post* story headlined 'IRS Urged to Seek Millions in Taxes on Aramco Profits' was inaccurate."

July 11: "Dr. Brzezinski noted a good editorial in Sunday's *New York Times* on U.S./Soviet relations."

July 25: "The President . . . is pleased with the efforts of one oil company—and displeased with another—in running advertisements about the administration's energy program."

August 1: "Ms. Kreps said that a recent story by James Wooten in *The New York Times* inaccurately stated that no money was reaching farmers under the administration's drought program. In fact, . . . etc." "Deputy Press Secretary Rex Granum said that the Press Office had already corrected the Wooten story, but that the correction has not been printed. The President suggested that a press release be issued based on information supplied by Agriculture, Commerce and Interior." Same meeting: "Mr. Schultze inquired about a proposed compromise to the Farm Bill which he heard discussed on the radio. . . ."

On that same very productive August 1, "The President expressed his concern about recent leaks to the press regarding specific discussions at Cabinet meetings. He urged Cabinet members and White House staff *not* to characterize to the press what he and others say during the Cabinet meetings and said that Rex Granum should be the person to brief the press on the meetings."

August 29: "Mr. Blumenthal asked whether press reports that the new leadership in China is focusing more on economic development than on ideology were true. Mr. Vance said that it is true. . . ." Same day, "Dr. Schlesinger noted that several leading industry groups will sign a full-page 'Energy' ad in major newspapers and periodicals later this week. The ad was put together by AT&T Chairman John DeButts, and Exxon, among others, is signing it."

September 19: "Ambassador Young said . . . there was an article in *The Atlantic* by former Under Secretary of State George Ball which criticized the administration's policies on southern Africa."

October 17: "The President commented that the Evans and Novak column which appeared in newspapers on Saturday falsely attributed some comments to Hamilton Jordan concerning the Cabinet. An earlier Evans and Novak column was also totally inaccurate in describing a telephone call which never took place between the President and Rev. Billy Graham concerning Bert Lance."

November 7: "Dr. Brown . . . reiterated his position on SALT in an appearance on *Issues and Answers* which, because of a technical error, was not to be shown by the Washington, D.C. network affiliate until after midnight on Monday night. The President expressed interest in obtaining a transcript." Same meeting: "The President said that he is pleased that three Cabinet members appeared on Sunday television talk shows." Same meeting: "The President noted that Rex Granum no longer conducts news briefings on the Cabinet meetings; Mr. Granum added that he now simply tries to engage in 'rumor control.' "

January 16, 1978: "Dr. Brown noted that a recent *Washington Post* article describing the Supreme Court's action on the one-house veto question is erroneous." Same meeting: "Mr. O'Leary said . . . recent press accounts about the storage of nuclear waste in Carlsbad, N.M. have been inaccurate." Same meeting: "Mr. Califano said that a recent *Washington Post* article concerning HEW's efforts to stop outmigration of hospitals from center cities to suburbs was inaccurate. . . ."

March 6: "The President noted that there was a good article today in *The New York Times* on the Middle East." Same meeting: "Mr. Blumenthal said that today's *New York Times* editorial on the loan to New York City is also excellent."

These meetings have a way of deteriorating to the level of a park-bench bull session, where nobody knows what he's talking about and everyone is willing to give sweeping judgments. For example,

With this issue Robert Sherrill becomes The Nation's *White House correspondent.*

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ED KOREN

July 25, 1977: "Mr. Bergland asked whether the burning of coal will create a change in climatic conditions—an allegation in recent press reports. Dr. Schlesinger responded that there is some speculation concerning a 'greenhouse effect' which might raise the temperature by 6 degrees within the next several decades, and this possibility will be watched carefully. The President said that there is only a slight difference in the carbon dioxide blanket that results from burning coal compared with burning oil. The difference is much greater when atomic power is involved. The President said that the trend during the first part of the century was toward a slight increase in temperature, but Dr. Schlesinger noted that there is some evidence to support the opposite conclusion."

Not infrequently one runs across items that show how the best of intentions fizzle before they are acted on in this administration. June 27, 1977: "Dr. Schlesinger said that the 'most massive lobbying effort in many a year' is being waged in support of legislation to deregulate the price of natural gas. . . . Total deregulation would triple the price and result in substantial increased revenues to producers. . . . Dr. Schlesinger noted that independent studies by the Library of Congress and the Congressional Budget Office say that the administration's estimates of the impact of decontrol are conservative—figures may be as high as $150 billion. He suggested that the President might hold a press conference to clarify the statistics. Mr. Strauss strongly endorsed the need for this sort of clarification, and the President asked Dr. Schlesinger to draft a brief statement that could be made on television." But clarification was never accomplished; the administration has continued to cover up this bad news from the public. While the bill being pushed by Carter does not decontrol immediately, it will decontrol prices within a few years—and Carter has still failed to tell the American people the truth about how heavily it will hit their pocketbooks.

Carter is obviously bored silly by the weekly written reports he demands from Cabinet members. Such reports aren't at all a bad idea, but they are an excuse for the Cabinet to run on and on in the windiest fashion, in an attempt to impress him. March 14, 1977: "The President said that he is reading the weekly summaries carefully. He will not return them to Cabinet members unless he has a question about them." That note of satisfaction was struck when he had been in office only two months. But sourness soon developed. August 1, 1977: "The President said that some weekly summaries submitted by Cabinet members are superb, while others contain unnecessary information about travel plans, speeches and related items. . . . He noted that he will not complain about the brevity of reports." November 7, 1977: "The President asked the Cabinet to keep their weekly summaries brief and concise." January 16, 1978: "The President asked Cabinet members to hold down the length of weekly reports. He prefers a one-page summary, similar to the *Kiplinger Report* format, unless there are extraordinary circumstances." □

KURT VONNEGUT

What *could* a Cabinet meeting be, after all, given our society and form of government, other than an adult version of a first grade's Show and Tell? In both situations, the participants must ransack their minds for something interesting to talk about on such a day, and for the sake of talk alone. No real business can be done.

Cabinet members, like first graders, it turns out, sometimes refuse to bring anything to show or tell. At the meeting of August 1, 1977, for example, Atty. Gen. Griffin Bell, the chief law-enforcement officer in a nation of 200 million edgy citizens, said he had nothing to report. That was it: zero. Agriculture Secretary Robert Bergland, on the other hand, was busier than a one-armed paperhanger. He said that the forest-fire season had begun, that 300 fires had already blazed up, and that more were expected. Whether anybody made the obvious suggestion, sotto voce, as to what he might do about his forest fires, we will never know.

U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young said he was going to Jamaica on Friday, and would like to talk to Bergland about sugar before he left. Defense Secretary Dr. Harold Brown said that he had been

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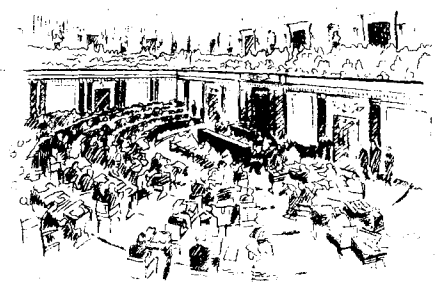

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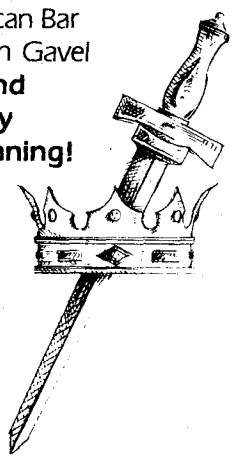

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in South Korea for most of the past week, discussing details of withdrawing U.S. troops from there. And so on. There is a lack of proportion here. One child's hamster, so to speak, gets precisely as much polite attention as another child's live mortar shell from World War II.

Is this scandalous? Not at all, in my opinon—not even with Bert Lance present. And Bert Lance *was* there on the day I describe, a week or so before he was canned for questionable dealings with banks he controlled. He was extolling fiscal responsibility. He asked that ten minutes be set aside at a future meeting for a discussion of how agencies might make more realistic estimates of their future expenditures.

I, for one, am *enchanted* that the executive branch of my government should require the heads of its departments regularly to reveal themselves to one another as children—without pomp, without badges of authority—variously shy or boastful or clever or ignorant or sulky or playful or untruthful or humorless or what have you. I would not want to be a Bert Lance in such a situation. Kids can be cruel in what they secretly think about a guy when he's reciting—especially if he's fat and teacher's pet.

The Italian dictator Mussolini, I remember, had the members of *his* Cabinet jump from springboards and over hurdles of fixed bayonets in public—to demonstrate their fitness to lead. The American scheme seems simultaneously more instructive and cruel, and accidentally a Freudian master stroke.

Subject for next week's Cabinet meeting: "What I Did Last Summer." □

MARCUS RASKIN

Several different images came to me while reading through the reports of the Carter Cabinet meetings. The first was to discount the reports somewhat, for their rendering seems duller than any series of meetings could be. It was like experiencing a "sit-play" in which each person acts a particular social role, avoids particular topics, does not want to look bad before the ultimate authority figure (the President) or his sibling rivals.

The second image that flashed through my mind was that the Cabinet members were like passengers on a bus who did not connect with one another, each going to a different place. Except in rare cases each Secretary appeared to be alone in his or her position, not expecting, getting or requesting help from any other member.

As Robert Redford said in *The Candidate*, there must be a better way; what comes across in these documents is that the process of thinking and acting on decisions, or the substance of what is debated, cannot begin to reach our most grievous problems. While there are high-sounding and virtuous statements from the President, and hopes for success for each program reported on by the responsible Secretary, there is neither a sense of statecraft (how to see that things which will come together in the future bear on present judgments), nor a sense of tactical purpose (how specific actions may be carried out which in fact accumulate little victories), nor an overall path (one that follows an interwoven strain of good ends that are debated, worked out and understood by Cabinet officials, the government as a whole, the society and other nations).

What is needed is a substantive political process, one grounded in more clearly defined programmatic ideas that are yoked to political parties. The task then of the political party, Presidential and Cabinet leadership, is to mold and test the program at the grass roots. Lacking that sort of dialogue, the elected and selected leadership spends itself in media concerns and in fretting about what this or that columnist or newspaper says. Presidential leadership is isolated in America. Therefore, it finds that it must rely and act on institutional barons (big business, banks, etc.) and media manipulation to appear to be doing good and to survive.

Here are some notions that might improve the way Cabinet discussions could go and the way the Carter government might seek to move to a somewhat different level. There is no way that twenty people can do more than mention thirty-five different topics in the course of a single meeting.

(*1*) Therefore the show-and-tell aspects of Cabinet reports can be short-circuited. They should be submitted in writing and distributed before meetings so that they may be known to and digested by all the Cabinet members. A short period should be set aside at the meetings for cross-questioning about the information given in the papers.

(*2*) The President should circulate for each meeting an agenda designed to keep the discussion to three issues. They should be divided into matters requiring long-term, short-term and immediate action. The topics chosen for each meeting should impinge on one another in obvious and direct ways. Cabinet officials would therefore be expected to prepare their comments on the basis of short-term and long-term answers to particular topics. Thus, for example, the agenda for one discussion might be: (*a*) Is it time to move off the dollar standard as the reserve currency into a different international unit of monetary exchange? (*b*) Does the question of continued adverse balance of payments and trade demand a change in the costs of the NATO alliance and the development of alternative U.S. defense strategies? (*c*) Does the problem of full productive employment and inflation require less or more government expenditure if we were to change international defense commitments, global corporate privileges, and exporting policies? (*d*) By what legislative and regulatory means should U.S. bank speculation be controlled?

All Cabinet members would be asked to relate their areas of responsibility to such questions.

Marcus Raskin, co-founder of the Institute for Policy Studies, served as a member of the special staff of the National Security Council during the Kennedy administration.

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(3) Or take another example in the social policy and economic sphere. President Carter in his campaign committed himself to the balanced budget. Liberals have often thought that the balanced budget was a way to force the poor and the working class to be both poorer and available for no-future "private sector" jobs. A Cabinet that seeks to find a measure of balanced-budget equity in the society should not want to punish the poorest groups.

Thus, questions would go something like this: (*a*) The current interest payment on the national debt is $54 billion a year. How can this be substantially cut so that the poor and working people will not have necessary social programs disemboweled? Why does the government borrow from the wealthiest groups rather than tax them at a progressive rate? (*b*) What are the productive and income-producing activities that the federal government, along with state, local and community governments, should enter into? (*c*) If direct government competition with the "private sector" occurs, should there be quick deregulation except where health and safety factors are involved?

From such discussion special sub-Cabinet committees could form to debate specific recommendations and outline ways to proceed within the government and the society at large.

(4) At the end of World War II Sen. Robert LaFollette, Jr. outlined reorganization plans for the relationship between Congress and the President. He suggested that Congressional leaders and Cabinet leaders should meet regularly as a council to plan legislation and review programs with the President. Discussion and planning meetings of this kind would have the positive benefit of playing down the usual irritations and paranoia that plague political life. In the present situation this suggestion makes sense only to the extent that the leadership of Congress and the President are committed to a political program which is understood in the Democratic Party and in the nation at large.

(5) A word should be said about the foreign policy goals of the administration as they come through in the meetings. Contrary to what the press says, President Carter's group is far more subtle in its foreign policy activities than was the Kissinger-Nixon group. However, its subtlety in playing global geopolitics, using arms shipments and human rights as instruments, has not resolved any major questions about the arms race, local wars, or the crisis of two-thirds of the world in its relationship to the United States and other rich nations. Instead, there seems to be a struggle between those who want to isolate the Soviet Union by playing it off against the other socialist nations and the West, and Vance's view that we should proceed on a case-by-case basis, taking situations as they occur. Both positions assume that the United States holds virtually all the cards of geopolitics. Neither is particularly relevant nor helpful in building the new scaffolding of a peaceful international system. □

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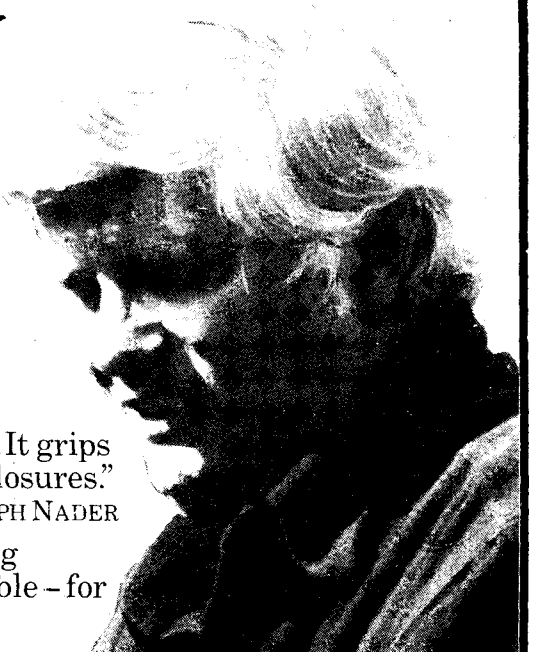

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MARCEL OPHULS

Trying to review President Carter's Cabinet meetings on the basis of the minutes prepared by Jack H. Watson, Jr. for either their social content, their moral uplift or their entertainment value is no laughing matter. As it happens, I've been confronted with this particular assignment while on a brief vacation on the shores of Lake Champlain. The dilemma, therefore, was acute: how could my holiday-reading diet be balanced in such a way as to contain a maximum of P.G. Wodehouse, while doing justice to J.H. Watson, Jr.? After some hours wasted, cursing against the dryness of the latter's prose, I came up with a tentative solution: I would use the scientific alibi of random sampling. Like those shining examples of modern research, the Nielsen ratings, the TV documentary and the Hollywood sneak preview. I would select a cross section; I would concentrate on one particular Cabinet meeting. After which, back to Jeeves, Bertie Wooster, and watching white sails on blue water.

Let us now submit the meeting of Monday, November 7, 1977 to scrupulous analysis—though deploring, as we must, our inability to squeeze a folding chair between, say, Bunny Mitchell and Dick Moe (whoever they are) to become, at least for a short time, a privileged spectator of the human drama unfolding through top-level policy making. Given only Mr. Watson's colorless resume, one misses the facial expressions, the significant pause, the raising of an eyebrow, the caustic wit and subtle ironies that one naturally expects when brilliant personalities jostle for position.

President Carter called the meeting to order at 9:02 A.M.; it was adjourned at 10:55 A.M. According to my calculations, *in one hour and fifty-three minutes, fifty-two main topics were discussed*, and more than eighty subtopics. (For the purpose of this inquiry, I define a main topic as a totally separate subject for policy consideration. *Examples*: SALT II; energy; appearances by Cabinet members on *Face the Nation*. And as subtopics the obviously related addenda to main topics. *Examples*: Russian attitudes toward disarmament; coal conversion and natural gas storage; appearances by Cabinet members on *Issues and Answers*.

Not allowing for the inevitable digressions, the rambling anecdote, the occasional joke, the lighting of cigars or cigarettes, the surreptitious intake of the occasional pep pill prescribed by the White House adviser—all the real-life trivia such a serious observer as Mr. Watson could not be expected to record—*that gives us an average of two minutes and eight seconds per main topic, and only seconds for related issues.*

Inevitably, by simple arithmetic, one is led to the conclusion that no matter how sparse the Watsonian prose may seem, it must be a fairly complete account of the proceedings. So much the worse!

And yet, under item 17 of the Watson memoir, one is startled to read the following: "He [the President] asked the Cabinet to keep their weekly summaries brief and concise. He suggested that they might reduce the narrative, but not necessarily the number of items covered."

There used to be a dictum, now mercifully out of fashion among Hollywood studio heads: "Any script that can't be told in less than three minutes isn't worth producing." To the old moguls' wisdom we can now add Carter's New Law: "Any national or international crisis that can't be handled in two minutes and eight seconds is not worth having."

This, I fear, is an integral part of the managerial mythology, a rationalization for the managerial ripoff. And it's anything but a joke! How long did it take Nixon's Cabinet to discuss the Christmas bombing of Hanoi? How long did it take Columbia's board of directors to reinstate the self-confessed embezzler David Begelman? How long did it take Fred Silverman to schedule the latest kiddy porn?

We are told that alcoholics wish to impose their addiction on others. In the same way, the modern manager, who insists that his decisions should be taken on the basis of capsulated reports describing other people's work, also wishes to reduce the general public's attention span to below even its current deplorable level.

If TV criminals can be arrested and justice dispensed in forty-nine minutes flat, not including commercials, why should Cabinet meetings lag behind? Come, come, shake a leg. Time is money; limousines are idling at the front gate to drive ministers to airports; international committees are waiting to be chaired in Brussels and Geneva. In the interest of speed and efficiency, therefore, be reassuring! Avoid controversy! Think positive! Blandness saves time and banality cuts corners. By the time apocalypse peers around the corner, Destiny's Managers might well be dead, or working for Lockheed.

Many years ago, when employed by French television, I had occasion to conduct filmed interviews with some of postwar Europe's political leaders. In those days, I was a much younger, more naive observer of the scene. Between reels, I would pop the wide-eyed question: "What happens when the official speeches have been made, the Russian toasts dutifully listened to, the photographers shooed away, and the doors closed?"

The response was invariably enigmatic. Chancellor Adenauer creased his monkey face into a grin and looked out the window. Pierre Mendes-France shrugged his shoulders in a gesture of resignation. Sir Anthony Eden shot his cuffs and referred me to his voluminous memoirs. I should have trusted the Frenchman's eloquent shrug. Like Sherlock Holmes confronted with a more than usually knuckleheaded

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Marcel Ophuls is the director of, among other films, the celebrated documentaries, The Sorrow and the Pity *and* The Memory of Justice.

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Dr. Watson, he was pointing out that the mystery of the dog was that it did not bark in the night.

Behind closed doors, apparently, the extraordinary is not allowed to happen. Why? Perhaps because the Managers of Destiny *need* a process of intellectual reduction to maintain the appearance of being able to bear the weight of our intractable problems. The board-room meeting is the ideal stage for the elaborate choreography of managerial ballet. Knowledge can be systematically avoided, and significant information cut off before it threatens to upset. When the Secretary of the Treasury states that Social Security legislation is too expensive, the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare intervenes to declare that the dedication of the Hubert Humphrey HEW building was "a lovely event." When, at another meeting, Ambassador Leonard announces that a breakthrough might be expected at the U.N. Conference on Disarmament, the President replies that he plans a reference to disarmament in his speeches, and the discussion trails off into ramblings about the feasibility of Presidential attendance at the conference. This is style over substance with a vengeance. But what style! As President Carter's Cabinet meetings so tediously demonstrate, the board-room agenda provides a framework for digression, emphasizes triviality and, by providing escape from reality, guarantees intellectual comfort.

When it comes to the energy crisis, nuclear dissuasion or the Middle East, the detachment is Olympian and the speed phenomenal. Compared to such imperial haste, the style of Barbara Walters striving, thirty seconds before the commercial break, to obtain a considered judgment on abortion from a bisexual literary celebrity would seem Proustian.

And yet, at the November 7th meeting, five Cabinet members and the President found time for a lively and presumably lengthy discussion on the advisability of nominating inspectors general to monitor the activities of the various ministries. Ambassador Young took time out to give his colleagues detailed insight into his busy schedule. Secretary Califano announced his plans for a European junket "to study national health insurance" in Germany and England, and no one bothered to inquire how a Washington lawyer's inspection of medical equipment in a London hospital could enlighten the AMA and the American public as to the merits of the British welfare state. Nor did anyone contradict the same Mr. Califano when he congratulated the Attorney General on his handling of the Helms case. This spirit of good fellowship and mutual good will has the advantage of leaving ample time for the Chief Executive to return to the vital topic of his Cabinet members' past and future appearances on *Meet the Press*, *Face the Nation* and *Issues and Answers*.

The format, apparently, also allows the provincial view of the world to be presented with maximum credibility. When Mr. Blumenthal tells his fellow Americans at the Cabinet table that "Germany and Italy look to us to promote economic stability within their own borders," the outside observer is forced to ask whether intimate meetings with the leaders of the Western alliance can be of value to those who, jet propelled at taxpayers' expense, hear in foreign capitals only what they want to hear, or what their patriotic self-esteem will allow them to hear. Surely, what Chancellor Schmidt must have attempted to convey to Secretary Blumenthal in Bonn could only have been some polite variation of his endlessly repeated public warning that the United States must cease exporting its inflation and the monetary consequences of its laissez-faire wastefulness. But the paraphrase of the German's thought must have been reassuring to Mr. Blumenthal's listeners, since it passed uncontradicted. From the rock of the Lorelei to Disneyland, something must have been lost in the translation.

Of all the populist pseudo-issues that the current Presidency clings to for dear life, I suggest there is none more abjectly demagogic than the great paper chase syndrome.

"[The President] commended HEW on reducing the annual paperwork burden imposed on state and local officials from approximately 44.5 million person hours to 34.3 million." According to reliable estimates, there are more than 150,000 public servants at the national, state and municipal levels, including social workers, hospital chiefs, school principals, welfare officials, men and women whose professional lives and responsibilities are presumably affected by information to and from HEW. Therefore, the larger, pre-reform statistic would mean 300 reading hours annually per individual public servant. That is twenty-five hours a month, *that is one hour a day not counting weekends.* In a nation of illiterates, where only 5 percent of the population is reputed ever to read a book, this is the perfect campaign issue, the ultimate political scandal. That hordes of public servants should waste an hour daily of the taxpayers' time and money actually *reading* reports on their society's business cannot be tolerated.

Perhaps the Presidential palace, its ballrooms and its board rooms, has become the safest hiding place for the fast-talking and slow-witted conformist. The majestic eagle's high altitude flight holds endless fascination for the emptiest birdbrains among us. It seems to offer the most radical refuge from individual responsibility, and from the bleak necessity of catching the early worm on the morning subway.

The way from the C-minus English essay to the snappy Executive memo may be a lot shorter than we think. Albert Speer used to tell me that a major clue to Hitler's conduct of the war was to be found in his bohemian youth. The ultimate goal for the college dropout may soon become the American Presidency.

Let us look no further for an explanation of the sexiness of politics and the mediocrity of politicians. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

The Capstone Of Imperial Fiction

BENNY GREEN

THE RAJ QUARTET. *By Paul Scott. William Morrow & Co. 4 vols. $29.95.*

Those baffled outsiders who find the pageant of the British Empire incomprehensible need only open an old atlas to find complete enlightenment. There they will discover the apple-blossom pink of Victoria's imperial holdings daubed across a quarter of the world's land surface; if they then add a command of the oceans which was more or less absolute, and measure off those vast estates against the whimsical scramble of islands standing off the West coast of Europe, they will soon begin to grasp the miraculous nature of the enterprise. To the British it was, as Scott Fitzgerald put it in another context, something commensurate with their sense of wonder. As a matter of fact it was more than commensurate, which explains why for the most part they barely grasped the implications of the Empire generally and India in particular, leaving it to two minorities to do the work, the soldiers who policed it and the public-school boys who administered it.

But the Empire, if it defeated the intellectual grasp of most of the English, did stir their corporate imagination. Through the 19th century the Englishman abroad displayed an extraordinary degree of self-confidence, which steadily congealed into smugness as the generations slipped by. At the heart of this smugness was the Empire and at the heart of the Empire was India. All the imperialist grandees, from Disraeli to Churchill, perceived that without India nothing else was viable, no far-flung coaling stations, no twin drawbridges at Gibraltar and Suez to lock up the Mediterranean like a baronial park, no naval dominance, or the "freedom of the seas" as it was wittily described. India was the jewel in the crown, and without its scintillations, without the viceregal flummery and the imperial majesties, the whole ramshackle edifice would come apart at the imperial seams, as indeed it eventually did.

As to why the British bothered, nobody has ever been quite sure, least of all the British themselves, who have usually been happy to leave the theorizing to outsiders. It was Mark Twain who expressed his admiration for the arch-imperialist Cecil Rhodes and then added, "When his time comes I shall buy a piece of the rope for a keepsake." Twain got his imperial equation right, but then so did George Santayana when he suggested that "Never since the days of Greece has the world had such a sweet, just, boyish master." The truth lay somewhere between the parochial idealism of the one and the sentimental rhetoric of the other, but whether posterity sides with the horn-swoggler or the philosopher, there remain at least two uniquenesses about the British Empire, both very much to the point of Paul Scott's writing; first, that when it came to India it vacated voluntarily, and second, that the imperial escapade inspired a whole new subsection of English literature which only now that the Empire has melted away, is beginning to emerge as an entity. It is more than a coincidence that three times over the last five years the most remunerative bauble in English literary life, the Booker Prize, has been awarded to novels about the British in India.

Scott's *Raj Quartet*, covering the last five years of British rule, from the Japanese invasion of 1942 to Independence Day, 1947, is a masterpiece, a truth already long accepted by those who read the four sections of the work as they appeared from 1966 to 1975, *The Jewel in the Crown, The Day of the Scorpion, The Towers of Silence* and *A Division of the Spoils*. But the publication of all four together in a boxed set is very much more than a mere publisher's ploy; on the contrary it is only aesthetic justice, for Scott, a writer who fully perceived the subtle rhythms running underneath the surface of his tale, and who took deep pleasure in intricate fictional ground plans, built the quartet as a single entity, and unless we accept it on those terms his most effective narrative weapon, the poignancy of restrospective irony, will be lost to us. Great events in the first volume are gradually diminished by time and subsequent events, until in the final book their reverberations have faded to a distant echo almost imperceptible, and for that reason more affecting than ever.

In its crudest terms, *The Raj Quartet* is about a sexual assault; the rape by natives of a daughter of the inviolable Raj. But it is also about the march of Independence, the inevitability of the British departure, the tragedy of Partition, the public school system, racial prejudice, power politics, the approximations to honesty of judicial procedure, sexual passion and the ineluc-

Benny Green is a frequent contributor to The Spectator.

SHORES

The sun makes a seasonable return.
It photographs the breakers, it captures
What I was and am. I alone here, silent,

Ask this beach to change change into memoir—
Speechless at first, an illuminant that like
The sun makes a seasonable return.

These seeded grasses, stirred by a distant
Earthquake, nod indicative heads to call back
What I was. And am I alone here? Silent

And buried, that earthquake trembles inside me.
Each single stem of grass takes its measure from
The sun and makes a seasonable return.

A stem flexes between root and seed.
I feel the elation, the torsion between
What I was and am. I, alone here, silent,

Acknowledge the debt fruition will pay.
The sun makes a seasonable return,
And breath returns. The white waves are breaking
What I was. And I am alone here, speaking.

Alfred Corn

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table forces of history, all of which pressures are implicated in the rape to weave a web of cause and effect as complex and as logic-defying as daily existence itself. Had there not been insurrectionary simmerings at the time of the arrests after the rape, would the charges and the sentences have been different? Would there indeed have been a rape at all? Who was motivated by what? Where does patriotism putresce into chauvinism? And which man knows the nature of his own compulsions to the point where he can explain himself, either to himself or to others? In narrating this tangled tale, Scott has created a huge cast of principals, each of whom can stand equally well both as an individual person and as an imperial archetype.

The quartet has been structured to an architectonic nicety; the work is divided into four parts; each part is subdivided into four or more sections, and each section, resembling a novella in its homogeneity, features a central narrator whose identity changes with the speculative nature of the action; sometimes it is one character, sometimes another; sometimes it is Scott himself, returning to the arena twenty years later, raking over the dead embers in an attempt to solve a mystery which has no solution. Each section focuses on one protagonist or group of protagonists, and it is with this form that Scott is best able to bring into play his exceptional gift for penetrating the dialectical defenses of his characters. A large proportion of them are women, Miss Crane for instance, the dedicated pedagogue who dies by means ironically native; Lady Chatterjee, an exquisitely finished portrait of what happens when one culture aspires to the nuances of another; the Layton sisters, drifting like cockleshells on the heavy seas of the Raj matrimonial market; Miss Batchelor, fondly recollecting the music hall ditties of a childhood spent in a street symbolically called Lucknow Road, Camberwell.

But the two central characters are opposed so diametrically as to smack of allegorical intent. Harry Coomer, who suffers the agonizing transmogrification into Hari Kumar when his father's business crashes, finding himself snatched from the cradle of an English public school and flung into that whirlpool of workaday India whose undertow is so strong that he never escapes it; Ronald Merrick, his deadly enemy, policeman-turned-soldier, elementary schoolboy - turned - imperial-panjandrum, the type of colonial administrator who throughout history has never failed to leave the locals asking for less. Although Merrick features the more prominently, it is Kumar who pervades the text even in his own absence, in which regard the two men resemble Iago and Othello, in that one has the larger role and the other the larger significance. What *is* Kumar's significance? Through his dilemma Scott sets us the insoluble problem of what to do with the man who, by being tossed between two antipathetic cultures, ends by being acceptable to neither.

In general the prose is decorous and self-effacing rather than ambitious, almost as though for long stretches someone is giving evidence at the bar of history; when on rare occasions Scott has a little flutter with an aromatic word or simile, a mumchance, perhaps, or a desuetude, it comes as a shock. A few images are unforgettable, the stuffed tiger "prowling in a nightmare of immobility on a wooden plinth"; and this of a nawab who, because he poses no threat to the ruling power, has been allowed "to blossom as it were like a small and insignificant rose in the heart of dead Mogul ambitions." This is an India in which Kipling has receded into history; when a functionary at the club denigrates him, he is rebuked by the Minister, who, "anticipating Mr. T.S. Eliot, thought well of him." Kipling in fact is much in Scott's thoughts and much in the thoughts of his characters, "who used to find themselves thinking of Kipling or A.E.W. Mason and looking forward to sundown."

At which point we return to the issue of the curious genre of imperial fiction of which *The Raj Quartet* is so superlative an example. In composing it Scott, who had experienced the last days of the Raj as a young soldier, was perfectly well aware of his own place in the Anglo-Indian mosaic. And it was this awareness which indicates that degree of artistic courage it must have required of him to model his masterpiece on the rape of an English lady by an Indian, for nobody knew better than Scott that E.M. Forster had already treated the identical theme in one of the most prestigious novels of the century, *A Passage to India*; as to the relative merits of the two works, here is the voice of the Raj itself, in the person of the administrator-historian

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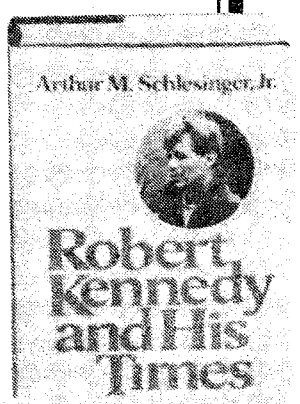

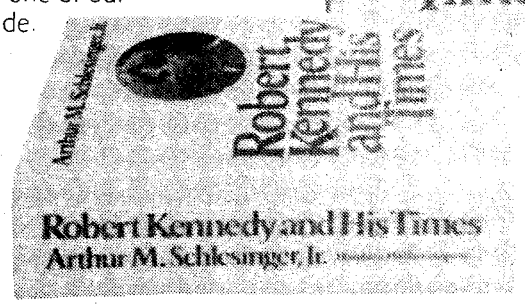

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Philip Mason: "Forster's British officials are cardboard figures, because they have been wrenched from their context and no attempt made to understand their work." Well, Scott has returned them to that context and understood their work so well that he makes us understand it too.

To date there has appeared no English critic who will do for English imperial writing what Edmund Wilson did for American Civil War literature in *Patriotic Gore*, that is, to relate the creative urge to its political and military background. When eventually that critical work is compiled, as one day it must be, it will surely be seen that just as Wilkie Collins with *The Moonstone* represents the bright morning of the Indian adventure when the imperial freebooters dined on deer and antelope, peacock and partridge, and just as Kipling marked the apogee of the occupation, when protocol had congealed into mulligatawny soup and the drowsy taradiddles of the regimental band playing airs from Gilbert and Sullivan, just as the drifters of Somerset Maugham waited for dusk in an Empire on which, it was said, the sun never set, so Scott's quartet marks the end of the affair. The most spectacular imperial melodrama in history, which opened in *The Moonstone* with the British first becoming aware of the jewel in the crown, now ends with *The Raj Quartet* as they mourn its irrecoverable loss. □

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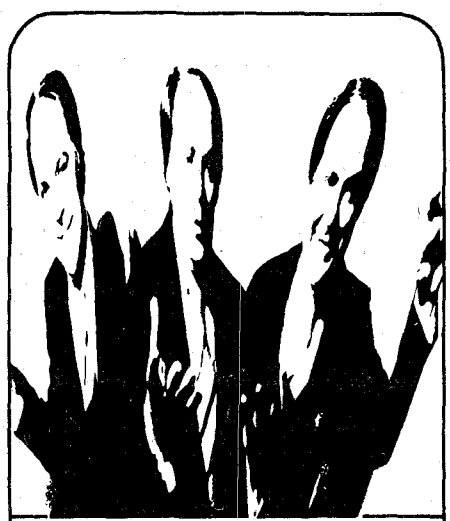
PAUL COWAN

ROBERT KENNEDY AND HIS TIMES. *By Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. Houghton Mifflin Co. 1,066 pp. $19.95.*

Ever since he was assassinated, Robert Kennedy has haunted my imagination—more than John Kennedy, more than Martin Luther King. For I think that he—more than the others—might have helped heal this polarized, unruly land.

I've felt that way since July 1968, when I covered George Wallace's Presidential campaign in Massachusetts for *The Village Voice*, and discovered

Paul Cowan is a staff writer at The Village Voice *and author of the forthcoming* The Tribes of America *(Doubleday).*



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that many of the people who planned to vote for Wallace had supported Kennedy before he was shot. I came to feel that week that Kennedy was the last liberal politician who could communicate with members of the white working class.

Besides, whenever I read about Kennedy I found myself touched by his blend of ruthlessness and shyness, his fierce determination to win and his vulnerability—the qualities Jack Newfield illustrated so poignantly in his book on Robert Kennedy. Those paradoxical traits echo through American literature and film. The tough-talking Bobby was a real-life Humphrey Bogart—Rick in the early scenes of *Casablanca*—and that street fighter's stance gave his well-publicized gentleness an unexpected emotional force. In Kennedy's case, the tough sentimentalist lived in the sort of places F. Scott Fitzgerald enjoyed describing.

Still, I've never been sure whether the Robert Kennedy who seemed so attractive in retrospect was real or the product of a brilliantly constructed media hype. More importantly, I've wondered whether the breadth of his appeal depended on his special, irreplaceable personality or whether his decisions and actions conveyed some message still relevant to the America of the 1970s. Was he a political James Dean—a vehicle for our nostalgia? Or was he a genuinely prophetic figure?

No one can answer those questions with certainty. But a skilled historian can furnish some clues—and some lessons. That was why I was so eager to read Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.'s massive, long-awaited *Robert Kennedy and His Times*.

The book is briskly written and informative—it will be useful material for scores of American history courses. The final quarter—the recounting of the 1968 primary campaign—makes one ache with a sense of lost possibilities.

But as a serious attempt to come to terms with Kennedy—and with the era his life reflected—*Robert Kennedy and His Times* is a failure. Schlesinger's meager array of insights and ideas get drowned in a sea of facts. He has written an apologia, not an appraisal. He has failed to extract any enduring meaning from the complex journey that Kennedy (and Schlesinger himself) must have undergone.

The book is diffuse when it could be intense. The reason, I think, is that Schlesinger, a committed participant, has chosen to write a conventional biography. There is some internal justification for that literary decision. He wants to answer the crucial question of Kennedy's life—how the scion of one of America's most powerful families, the one-time ally of Sen. Joseph McCarthy, wound up, in Schlesinger's phrase, as "the tribune of the poor." He does so by devoting chapters to Kennedy's childhood, by arguing that Bobby's role as the scrawny seventh child of the athletic, achievement-oriented brood left him feeling lonely and vulnerable: unusually sensitive to other people's needs. Some of his early material is interesting, but as an attempt at psychohistory it is unconvincing—especially when you compare it to the wrenchingly poignant dreams that Doris Kearns includes in her biography of Lyndon Johnson.

What's more, Schlesinger's decision to dwell on Kennedy's childhood saddles him with the need to portray his protagonist's life in plodding chronological detail instead of organizing it around the tensions and the complex human relationships that made his character and his times so interesting. The book calls out for ideas—for a thesis—to give the cascade of facts and political issues some shape.

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that's able to give some pacing to Kennedy's life, some dimension to his enemies.

Those literary flaws are connected to political ones. Schlesinger is often too soft on his subject. He mentions Kennedy's alliance with Sen. Joseph McCarthy, his vindictiveness toward Jimmy Hoffa, his decision to let the FBI tap Martin Luther King's phone, his deep involvement in the United States' effort to overthrow Fidel Castro. But he doesn't dwell on those unpleasant aspects of RFK's career. He suggests that they stemmed from bad information, not from durable limitations imposed by his anti-Communist, upper-class background—or from real flaws in his character.

In other words, at crucial moments, Schlesinger experiences a failure of nerve. Ironically, that failure presents him with an aesthetic problem which ultimately causes him to rob Kennedy of some of the stature he wishes to give him. For Schlesinger is forced to suggest that Kennedy's life was a moral continuum, not a troubled turmoil of personal and political change. We hear about the events that affected him but we never glimpse RFK struggling to transform himself, or to transcend his protected past. And, since Schlesinger doesn't suggest any internal struggles, he can't hint at any epiphanies or even any self-discoveries in his flattened-out version of Kennedy's life.

Nor does he portray the complex and fascinating human dramas that lay just beneath the surface of Kennedy's political fights. For example, he insists on belittling Lyndon Johnson in ways that aren't quite credible. He can't seem to accept the fact that Johnson, not the Kennedys, enacted the most sweeping civil rights legislation of the century, and that he's still a hero to hundreds of thousands of blacks in the South. Nor can he accept the implications of his own evidence that the Kennedys and Johnson shared responsibility for the war in Vietnam, and that Johnson had reason to resent the "Harvards" who urged him to escalate the war and then deserted him and denounced him without ever admitting their own complicity. One doesn't have to feel much sympathy with LBJ to realize that he, like Robert Kennedy, was a flawed man who sought to transcend his background, his advisers, his era. The two politicians waged a battle that has the makings of an American *Iliad*, but Schlesinger reduces it to a far more simplistic fight between unalloyed virtue and small-minded evil.

In 1966, Robert Kennedy began to defy the reflexive cold-war liberalism that had pervaded his brother's administration by decrying the slaughter of 100,000 Communists in Indonesia, by urging that the American Communist leader Robert Thompson be buried in Arlington Cemetery, by supporting people who gave blood to the North Vietnamese. In part he was able to do that because during the McCarthy years—the era that defined the boundaries of acceptable political opinion for Arthur Schlesinger's generation of ambitious liberals—he had been so clearly on the side of the anti-Communists. No one could call him a Communist and make the charge stick. So, ironically, the worst political alliance of his career may have given him the psychological freedom to voyage toward a new political land, a place that few of his advisers, the courtiers at Camelot, had ever dared glimpse.

In foreign policy, his heresies were limited. He never did seem to rid himself of the pre-Copernican notion that America was the moral center of the universe, that powerful, well-intentioned men in Washington could shape the world with the telephone.

But his imagination ranged more freely over domestic affairs—over the America he traveled with such restless energy. He lacked the words to describe whatever it was he saw. He could only indicate his vision by deeds—by his repeated visits to Indian reservations, to the Mississippi Delta, to farm workers in California. And those deeds—projected on a national stage during the 1968 primaries—gave his brief, tragic run for the Presidency its emotional force.

I remember how accounts of that campaign jolted me. When he spoke at the University of Indiana Medical School, insisting, in his quavering, an-

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they sing all night
and line up on the wires
as if to make of their bodies
small notes;
a very simple song theirs,
almost a straight line
like the men going home,
looped strings
over their backs,
their dogs faithless
but willing
to be owned
(or is it because?).
You cannot enter
says the birdsong,
you cannot enter says
the thirteenth century,
you cannot says the sky
dropping and forcing you
to look away. The chicory
comes out late August,
purple heads
like grass skirts
covering what I
used to take for
nakedness.
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they are useful.
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they say,
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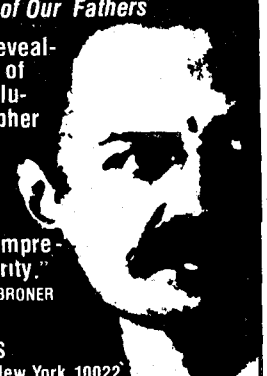

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gry voice, that "you sit here as white medical students while poor black men carry the brunt of the fighting in Vietnam," I watched the film clip and felt that he was talking directly to me. What difference did it make that I was against the war? Privilege was its own form of politics.

In Gary, Ind. when he insisted that crime was an issue—for blacks as well as whites—I remember thinking that he was guilty of both racism and demagoguery. It was during that week of the campaign that I decided I was for Eugene McCarthy. Nevertheless, the image of him traveling through Gary's streets, flanked by the white boxer, Tony Zale, a Gary native, and Gary's black Mayor, Richard Hatcher, lingered in my memory. So did the fact that his arguments—and his sensitively constructed stroke of political symbolism—won him commanding victories in black and white neighborhoods.

After he was shot, when I was interviewing Wallace supporters in towns like Lawrence and Lowell and Quincy, I realized, for the first time, that the troubled people I was meeting were—like their black counterparts—America's invisible men and women. They were afraid of losing their jobs—and they were afraid of losing their lives. They didn't believe that anyone with power cared about them. As I listened to them I began to see that Kennedy was the only Left-leaning politician who seemed to accept them as human beings instead of dismissing them as bigots. It was clear that Kennedy's concern for social justice and safety—and his compassion for the human being behind the ethnic or racial stereotype—were essential ingredients of a progressive political movement.

If Kennedy's campaign forced me to re-examine some of my attitudes, then Schlesinger, who was at the vortex of it all, must have had to re-evaluate some of the assumptions he'd developed as a Harvard professor during the cold war. Those few, hopeful whirlwind-like months must have provided him with an extremely useful dialogue with experience. The questions that were raised, the lessons that were learned, were too great to be erased by an assassin's bullet. Yet nowhere in his immense book does Schlesinger plumb his own depths, or enter into a searching discussion with any of his liberal friends, to show how Kennedy's heterodoxies had altered his own view of politics. His greatest failing is that, a decade after the assassination, he can't use his emotional involvement with Kennedy, or his own considerable intellectual equipment, to suggest the contours of his subject's evolving dream.

Schlesinger is too cautious: unwilling to venture toward the edge of risky psychological or political experiences. As a result, his book lacks the intellectual curiosity and the passion he admired so much in Kennedy.

Robert Kennedy and His Times will probably wind up on top of all the best-seller lists. But Schlesinger has failed to achieve the more important task that was within his grasp—to write a book that would help illuminate his age. We are all somewhat poorer for that. □

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Looking Both Ways

EARL SHORRIS

WRINKLES. *By Charles Simmons. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 182 pp. $7.95.*

Charles Simmons and I are friends. We talk often about writing, including his work and mine. Mostly we talk about other writers. He enjoys talking about Chekhov and the suspense of Latin sentence structure; I answer with Latin American novels and political philosophers. It is a good friendship: we do not have to gossip very much.

I did not read *Wrinkles* before it was printed, except for the portions that appeared in *American Review 24*. The novel was to be a venture in the form, and I thought that if it worked I would like to write about it.

One learns nothing about a novel from knowing the novelist; the graduate students are wrong: the context is language, not biography; and any intent, any teleology beyond the will to make a novel can only degrade the work. If the writer goes about his work seriously, as Simmons has, the novel will not be an alibi for a life, and the distance between the beginning and the end will be far less than the distance between personal history and the words chosen and ordered on the page.

Have you heard any good definitions of the novel lately? I once heard a stupid woman say, speaking of an unfashionable work, "This is not a novel." A corrupted woman, she became an editor by accepting the theory that the novel had died in England in the 19th century when the pound was

Earl Shorris, a novelist and essayist, is a contributing editor to Harper's.

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firm. Simmons has made a form in opposition: a Catholic novel, formally Aristotelian; compressed, it opposes invention to expansion.

Forty-four categories in apposition comprise *Wrinkles*. In each category the hero's life passes before the reader, beginning in childhood and ending in speculation about old age. The present time of the hero is the middle of middle age, a vantage point from which the not quite omniscient narrator looks both ways.

The first category is numbers, a birth of abstract thinking, beginning with the number one (Joyce's moocow, Sartre's words, Augustine's sin, the convention of the writer who does not spare himself); and the last category tells not of death but of the fear of death. In every category the hero grows close to death, his death is implied; and on the following page he begins again. The tension of the novel lies in the turning of the page, between death and resurrection. Echoes of the tension appear throughout, even in an act so ordinary as the purchase of two suits of clothing:

> In his sixties he will purchase shoes two pairs at a time. His father had done the same thing when his father was sixty, as a guarantee against death. Suits he will continue to buy singly, except on one occasion when he will buy two, a sporty herringbone ("The older the bird the brighter the plumage," he will say to the salesman) and the other dark blue.

Like St. Augustine in *The Confessions* struggling against the seemingly ostensible truth of Manes, the hero, who has no name but the appropriate pronoun, seeks relief from the terrible dualities of this life. Born, become conscious, he encounters a world divided by the opposition between good and evil, but he cannot be certain of what they are, for they are always shifting. No Augustinian reconciliation in God and love comes to the 20th-century hero. A marriage fails, a second blooms in all but certainty. He is born, he ages, he is born again, ". . . as waking follows sleeping." No other answer can be offered through the life of the hero, only the metaphor of the form; he is otherwise content to have lived, to live, as if in the process itself that reconciliation may have been made.

Within the dogma of the form, under the implied words printed in red above each category, a twice-invented life occurs abstracted, then reified by category. The language is as tight-lipped as a schoolman's argument, even while it says love, irony or relieves the tension in occasional sentimentality:

> When his wife asked him to leave home he told his children that he and their mother would no longer be husband and wife but that he would always be their father. The children watched him carefully; he wept throughout the talk. Before he moved out the younger child drew for him a picture of herself sad. He gave it to his mother, whose eyesight was failing; she said it was very nice and hung it in her bedroom.

Nothing trendy happens in the novel: the hero visits no boutiques, takes no notice of the space program, offers no gossip about political figures or the lords of academia; he doesn't even jog. The discipline of the form permits only the inclusion of the thoughts and things essential to the particular life. There are no cosmic disappointments, only a recurring quietness, as in awe, at the winding down of a life (the predictions of the time following middle age are almost always said in softer words, the consonants somehow made to seem silent).

The arrangement of the categories offers as much commentary on the life of the hero as does the text itself:

> regrets
> birthdays
> children
> love
> anger
> . . . .

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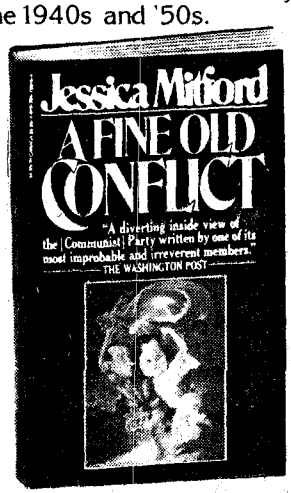
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In the aftermath of reading, the best novels leave the reader with something more than the vicarious experience. *Wrinkles* offers the Catholic and treasurable advice that nothing is final but forgiveness; and perhaps that is not, after all, so far from Augustine's answer. □

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FILMS

ROBERT HATCH

Russia in, I suppose, 1916. In cities the Empire was disintegrating and the men in ready-made suits were moving in. It was a dangerous time and, ironically by hindsight, a hopeful one. Away from the centers, the situation was both dangerous and dreamlike. Bands of partisans, Red and White, swept through the countryside, killing quickly and moving on. There were also bandits. I once read (was it in *Doctor Zhivago*?) of a train—half armored cars, half caravan—that wandered where the tracks led. On its flat cars men in top hats, seated in stuffed chairs, shot at the cattle in the fields. For the provinces this was a time outside time, of rumor and euphoria, a time of Mardi Gras with execution squads.

That is the milieu in which the Russian director, Nikita Mikhalkov has set *A Slave of Love*, an extraordinary picture. A small, not very proficient film company is on location in the south, shooting movies of the sort suggested by the title of this one. The star of the company is played by Elena Solovei; she is adored by the cameraman *cum* rehearsal pianist (Rodion Nakapetov). The names of those two actors can mean nothing to an American public, but when I mention Norma Talmadge and Wallace Reid, and if you are old enough, that will give you the idea.

Mikhalkov has narrated the trials, follies, frustrated aspirations and terrors of this 1916 company in the vernacular of the three-reelers it was making. The color—as far off toward pastel as no doubt it would have been had they used color in those days—throws a wash of innocence over the whole canvas. The men express their feelings by flinging their arms to heaven and punching their hats (Mr. Nakapetov, by exception, communicates with wan smiles, rather in the manner of Richard Barthelmess in *Tol'able David*). Mlle. Solovei hides her quick emotions beneath a hat of improbable circumference and places the back of her hand to her brow. On camera or off, there is little difference of style between the parts being played

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and the lives being lived, and this continuity of make-believe gives the picture a fragility that is lovely.

And tragic. The company bustles to shield itself from the frightening rumbles of a new society being born in Moscow. It knows itself to be too small, too trivial an enterprise to be drawn into the vise of history. But it happens. Even in their provincial retreat, some half-empty spa, a cutoff tentacle of Czardom is still flexing. From time to time, an officer of intelligence drops in on the troupe; he accepts a glass, kisses hands—a chocolate soldier, who can take him seriously? The cameraman has reason to do so.

I think I have said enough about this magic film; I don't want to anticipate its surprises. It would be possible, I know, to find out more about Mikhalkov, and I'm sure that when the newspapers reappear in New York they will carry much on him. For the moment, I am content to be astonished by his achievement. For it does seem astonishing that a picture so deft, so insouciant, so willing to acknowledge that flowers and sunshine do not ward off bullets, should come to us from the Soviet Union. It was a splendid idea to tell what it was like, in those months of

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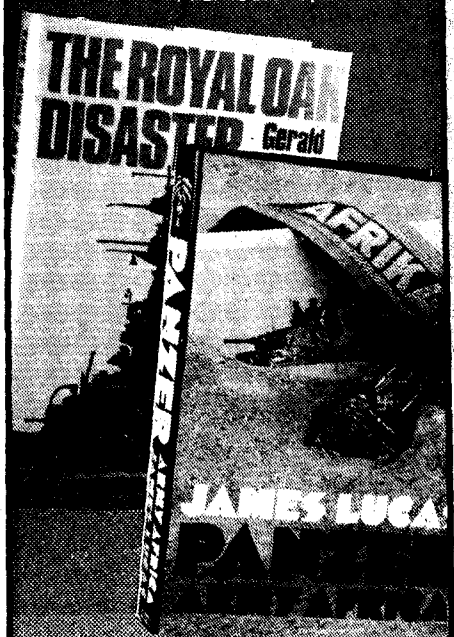

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suspense between tyranny and totalitarianism, in the vernacular of very early Hollywood. I believe it was as *A Slave of Love* shows it—wine and blood, smiles, flirtation, picnics and "bang; you're dead." For real.

N.B. A literal translation of the Russian title would be *The Pleasure of Love.* That conveys something of the fever to survive that underlies the story. The title being used here is merely quaint.

Who'll Stop the Rain, Karel Reisz directing, is based on Robert Stone's *Dog Soldiers,* said by many to be the best novel thus far to come out of Vietnam. In that case, and if the film is a faithful transcription of the book, Mr. Stone earned his laurels on the basis of a surprisingly brief appraisal of that slaughter ground. On the screen there are some appropriately gruesome shots of combat ineptitude, and a reporter (Michael Moriarty) determines to quit the spectacle of mindless destruction on learning that the high command has ordered an all-out attack on the indigenous elephants, thought by the brass to be carriers of Vietcong messages. But within fifteen minutes the picture has left Southeast Asia, never to return, and becomes a Made in USA chase with multiple bruises. The reporter, it is explained, became so disillusioned by the elephant hunt that he decided to chuck his assignment and return home. He decided, also, to provide for his future by shipping, courtesy of an ex-Marine buddy (Nick Nolte), a substantial weight of heroin, well but inconspicuously packaged. It reminded me, ever more insistently as the narrative gained speed, of that bird of illusion, the Maltese Falcon.

Who'll Stop the Rain is not as good a picture as *The Maltese Falcon.* But then few pictures are and I do not condemn it on that ground. Nor on the ground that in some quarters it is being grossly overpraised. It is a more than competent example of sadistic melodrama and I recommend it to anyone who finds refreshment in screams of anguish, *machismo* high jinks and a copious flow of blood.

The third principal, in addition to the disillusioned newsman and the accommodating ex-Marine, is the reporter's wife (Tuesday Weld), a perfectly normal pill-popping housewife and mother. This trio is supported, if that is the word for what they do, by various fell types, including an insanely jovial and epicene narcotics fence (Charles Haid, who was, as I recall, the insanely jovial and epicene fence of assorted merchandise in *The Late Show*).

But *Who'll Stop the Rain* is also not that good a picture. For one thing, it provides no character who could appear on the same screen with Art Carney's ulcer-tormented detective; for another, where the plot of the earlier film was, if eccentric, rational within its own premises, that of *Who'll Stop the Rain* is punch-drunk.

Nick Nolte dominates the story. He is a formidable man, powerful and with a craggy face, and he plays here the classic role of the king of beasts tracked by jackals. For much of the time he looks like a Neanderthal

STASIS

Something out there
refuses to give up.

Always air rises
into the blue or gray
or heliotrope.

A leaf shuffles
across the street.

Under the ice
the pond steams and stirs.

This nameless season
that grips us from within

is far colder, darker,
very still.

Jane Flanders

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hunter who has stepped out of some museum diorama and managed to arm himself with the latest quick-firing weapons. It is attractive to imagine oneself in this predatory role, untrammeled by civilization's restraints, but that sort of escape is essentially flapdoodle, and I resent a little the dragging in of Vietnam for the purposes of flapdoodle. The picture is a well-made exercise in the pornography of pain, ingeniously contrived for sensations, colorfully peopled with grotesque minor ruffians, technically meticulous, embellished with grandiose mountain and desert scenery, and discreetly sexy. Nolte's performance has made some reviewers mention Marlon Brando, which goes to show how quickly the excellence of *The Wild One* can be forgotten. □

Indigenous Music

NAT HENTOFF

The high, lonesome harmonies are Appalachian and the banjo-like guitar picking is also from the mountains. The words are about forty years spent in a cotton mill "till the Brown Lung laid me down." Another tune—by Dorsey Dixon, a textile worker for more than fifty years—tells of the time when 8-year-olds were whistled into the mill at five in the morning. Those "Babies in the Mill" aren't there any more, but Brown Lung is. And the union is still on the outside, trying to get in. ("You took my labor/You took my home/But for God's sake, boss/Leave my union alone.")

This is an album I'd like to see laid on all those feckless liberals who keep on buying J.P. Stevens goods at Bloomingdale's, B. Altman's—and their equivalents in other cities. The title is *Brown Lung Cotton Mill Blues* (June Appal Recordings), but the set is not part of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union drive against Stevens. It ought to be, because it tells more of the discarded lives in those mills than any quantity of leaflets and sheaves of statistics.

What makes the performances in the set so powerful is that this is not an exercise in hammering agitprop. The members of the Mountain Musicians' Cooperative, who took no money for their work here, obviously know which side they're on; but they're also concerned that the music be as true as the

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It's been too long since we last talked.
Ain't misbehavin', are you Mr. A?
—Sixth Avenue Sadie

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stories they tell. Accordingly, the playing and singing resound from deep within Appalachian traditions — the newer songs just as much as such vintage epics as "Roane County," a story of the broken strike in Harriman, Tenn. in 1934.

When J.P. Stevens, Darlington and Harriet-Henderson are finally brought into the (early) 20th century, this album will still be played—for the toughly and tenderly resilient music, as well as for the history.

June Appal Recordings is part of a larger Appalachian cooperative that includes film making and video taping; a community cultural center; a traveling theatre and photo workshop; and the quarterly journal, *Mountain Review Magazine*. These are not voyeuristic exercises by outsiders wanting to "uplift" the natives but rather involve mountain people, including youngsters in the whole process, also including the decision making. The overall operation is called Appalshop, and among its funding sources is the National Endowment for the Arts—about which I now feel more kindly.

I'll be writing about other June Appal Recordings from time to time, but want particularly to cite Si Kahn's *New Wood*, with the Mountain Musicians' Cooperative. Kahn, a young singer whose style is wholly shorn of pretension and affectation, has a strong, clear, supple voice and the timing of a classic storyteller.

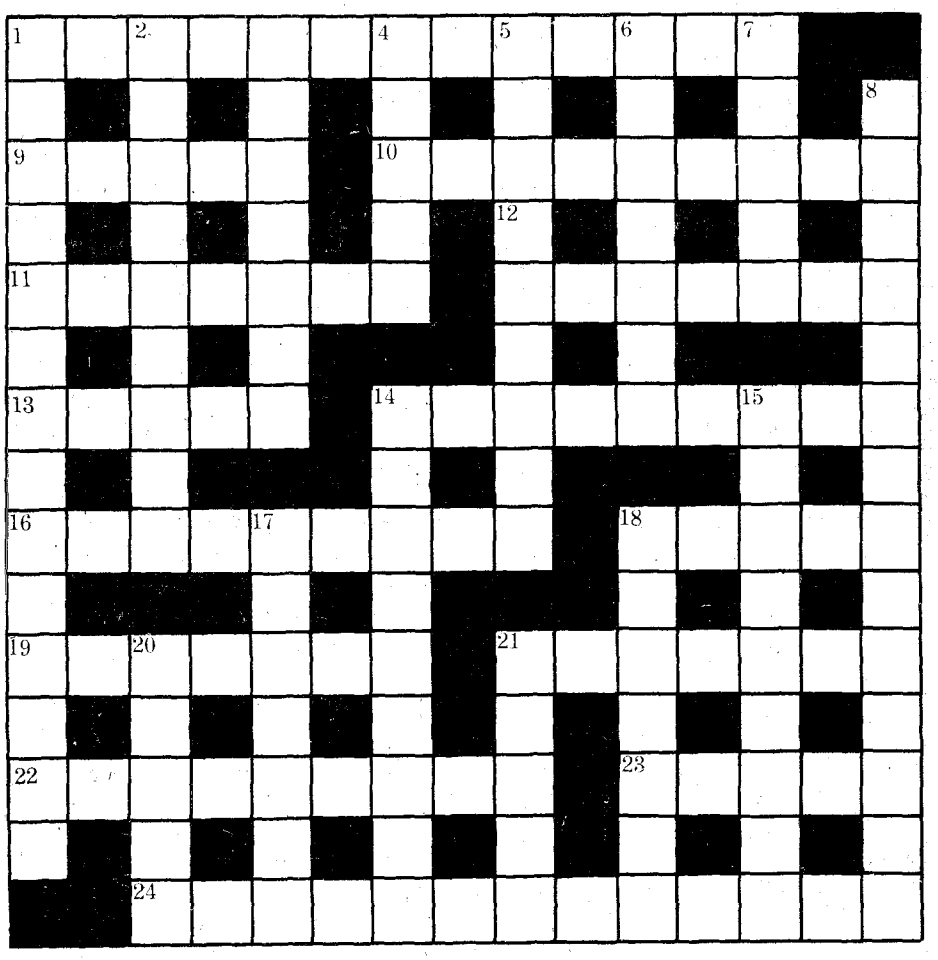
Among the vignettes is one of a "Backroom Lady" who never shows up at the country club or on the Sunday fashion page but is a crepuscular confidante of the town's most upstanding citizens. Among the strike songs, one is the kind you'd expect—at a coal mine. But another, "The Better Half of You," turns on a very small but fundamental scale. A woman is about to leave what, from outside, seems like a most harmonious union. ("You make love to me the way you want to love me/But it's somehow always you that's satisfied. . ./No I won't be the better half of you.")

There are tunes of terminal loneliness; of a town left with only the sound of the wind after the mill has been shut down; and a rousing anthem of a "Truck Drivin' Woman." ("Ain't you never seen a truck drivin' woman/Ninety pounds of fire in a five foot frame/And you better move on over/'Cause I'm right behind you in the left hand lane.")

For a catalogue, June Appal Recordings is at Box 743, Whitesburg, Ky. 41858. Each record is $5.50 postpaid. The music is guaranteed handmade. □

The Nation Crossword Puzzle No. 1742

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Not the one with a radium dial, pictured as being famous. (3,5,5)
9 What some people buy on words with a special concept. (5)
10 And in real trouble it might promote violent activity! (9)
11 In old Rome, see inside the 10 sort to make it clear. (7)
12 Come out again—or put out again? (7)
13 Is father 'round about, as one might fear?
14 What His Honor holds to weigh the vessel? (9)
16 If a person does with a bee, he may not get another chance. (9)
18 Tempered with lack of color, it's a reputedly peaceful valley. (5)
19 One of the things you might take if you fool around. (7)
21 Reflectors place us awkwardly this way.
22 You might have put the car into it at one time. (9)
23 It's all right, with a ratio to be found in Africa. (5)
24 On this, one used to be peeling, in stereotypic humor. (7,6)

DOWN

1 One who does needlework sort of made Leo the ragged type. (14)
2 Not a late quality of some of the British peerage. (9)
3 Knotted ties and this as a substitute? (7)
4 and 20 Does it make earth a bitter disappointment? (10)
5 Bird variety in what Simple Simon wanted to taste first, being connected with an overseas hitch in the service. (3,6)
6 Capable of being stretched when made in steel. (7)
7 Scissors and such in place of cargo. (5)
8 With change of attire I prevent explaining the meaning. (14)
14 Medusa, perhaps. (9)
15 Meat and drink coming back, to a degree, I find important in Babylon. (9)
17 A pretty spirit with a period of stone. (7)
18 Such musical technique is rather shaky.
20 See 4 down
21 Proving a poet can hold a lot of beer. (5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1741

ACROSS: 1 Talking-to; 9 Unmoral; 10 Convict; 12, 11 and 13 Little Bighorn; 15 and 16 Visiting nurses; 20 Likeness; 23 Toss; 24 Pushtu; 25 Ink; 28 Blatant; 29 Ferment; 30 Early; 31 Milk teeth. DOWN: 1, 6 across and 26 Thumb-nail sketch; 2 Limoges; 3 Irrelative; 4 Gelatins; 5 Occult; 6 Nine; 7 In irons; 8 Satanists; 14 Bureaucrat; 15 Vegetable; 17 Rightful; 19 Despair; 21 Epicene; 22 Custom; 27 and 18 Lady Godiva.

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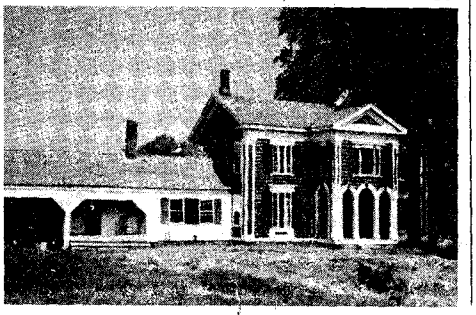

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